CORN MAZE, 4 | SLICE OF LIFE, 36 | NOTE FROM NANCY, 44

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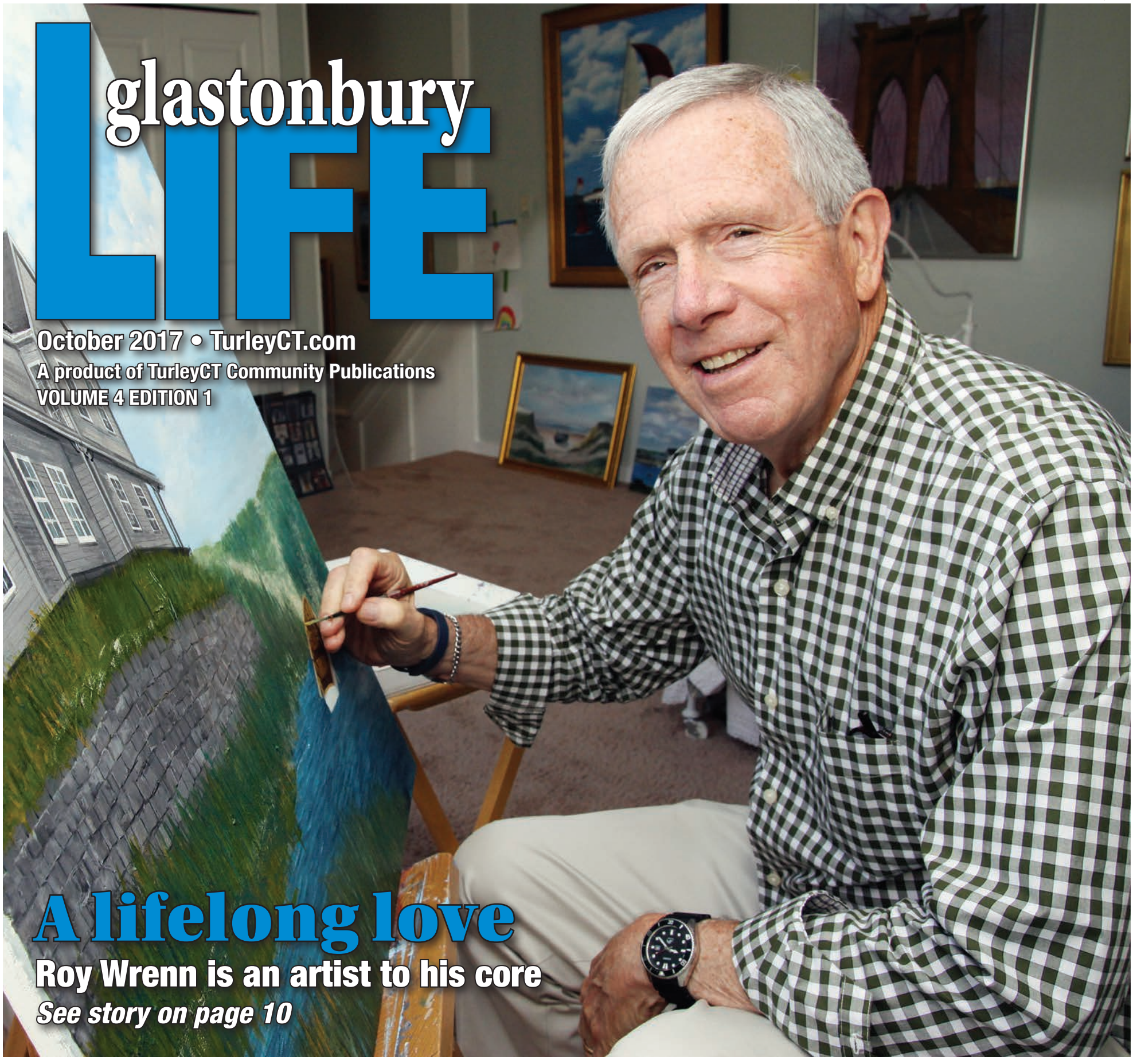
VOLUME 4 EDITION 1



A lifelong love

Roy Wrenn is an artist to his core

See story on page 10

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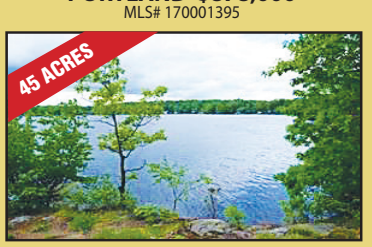

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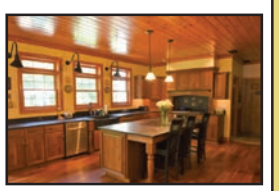

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"As soon as I got certified I responded to an ad in the paper that said Glastonbury was looking for a teacher for fifth grade. It's been wonderful." - *Chris Robbins, Glastonbury's teacher of the year.*

See story page 8

ON THE COVER

Roy Wrenn combines his work in real estate with his love of art.

Photo by Lisa Brisson
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by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Corn maze is one of highlights of annual fall festival

If the corn is as high as an elephant's eye, it must be time for Riverview Farms' annual corn maze, part of the fall festival Robb's Farm. The event also includes hayrides, a pumpkin bounce and, of course, Robb's ice cream, cider and other treats.

"It's a great partnership," Bethanne Couture of Riverview Farms said. "It's very rare. I always say we descend on him. We say it's mass chaos. There can be 300 cars in the parking lot on a weekend day. It's a way to extend our season. We're tobacco farmers. After we finish

Bethanne Couture of Riverview Farms designed the corn maze in the early spring although she said the design frequently changes once it's mowed.

Pumpkins are everywhere at Robb's Farm, where Riverview Farms holds their annual corn maze and fall festival.

Photos by Mara Dresner

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*Transactions for fiscal year ending 8/31/17. Julia Rosner represented either seller, buyer or both.

our harvest in August, we're crazy and like to stay busy. It's a way to get another season off the land. And we love sharing the farm with people. It's very rare that people can get on a farm these days. We like there to be an educational aspect to it."

Couture starts designing the maze months in advance.

"I start with a map and play around with it in the early spring. Then you get in and mow it and it takes on a life of its own so it never comes out to my map," she said. "My friend [Barbara Hallman] got a drone last year. She's my right-hand lady in both places. This looks easy but it takes a lot of preparation. She's taken pictures of the maze with her drone."

Couture likes to have a number of dead ends and to play with shapes, such as circles, serpentines and squares.

"We plant by the Fourth of July. That's how I usually spend my Fourth of July weekend," she said.

The corn is standard feed corn, which Couture said "grows nice and tall."

At two acres, she said it's a perfect size for families, even those with young children.

The corn maze is on two acres and features a number of dead ends.

"We want people to come and enjoy a day with their families," she said, adding that they take steps to ensure a safe environment for everyone.

There are a number of special events this year, including a flashlight maze event and a maze race for the kids. At each dead end, there are also design stamps that can be collected.

One of the most popular events is the haunted maze, which takes place the last weekend.

"It's a do-it-yourself [event] with some of the workers and some of our friends. We have a chainsaw and costumes. We have fun with it," Couture said. She recommends the haunted maze for teenagers and adults.

Lisa and Dennis Desmarais and their daughters, Josephine and Allison, have been enjoying the maze for several years.

"The last few years we've only done the haunted corn maze. Last year's especially was very well planned out and had us all rattled with adrenaline. Dennis is not easily taken in by scary hype but even he said parts were intense and that he was impressed. Both times we brought kids as part of a birthday party," Lisa Desmarais said. "The years prior to this, we've again taken

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My animals, gardening, and cooking, are my passions and hopefully it is reflected in my work.

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groups for birthday parties during the day or when it's lighter. The girls love running around, trying to lose one another and/or scare each other, and when it was available, would run up to the command post to scout out hiding spots or use it to help us find our way out. I spent most of the time hoping someone would remember me before the car rolled away! And enjoying hot cider or apple fritters is always on our to-do list."

Even though she's been running the maze for years, Couture said that she is constantly surprised.

"You can put something in you think is totally indestructible and someone will wreck it," she said with a shrug.

And, of course, she has her favorite funny stories from the maze.

"One of my workers was mowing the paths and he got lost. And then he couldn't find the mower and he thought he was going to be in trouble with my dad [Bill Dufford]. He had to break out the side of the maze. I thought he was going to have a heart attack," she recalled.

When Couture went into the maze, she found an odd sight.

"He had put a pumpkin or a stick down at every dead end," she said. "The poor man, he was absolutely panic stricken."

Another story that makes her laugh involved a group of her friends who went through the maze.

"You can get yourself so riled up. One of the ladies fell down. She was shouting, 'Go on without me; just leave me,'" she said. "You never know how people are going to respond. It's an adventure."

She said people are sometimes surprised by who gets through the maze the fastest.

"The six year-olds are better at it than the adults," she said. "They don't think about it. They just do it." **GL**

The Riverview Farms corn maze at Robb's Farm is open Wednesdays through Sundays, 91 Wassuc Road, South Glastonbury, 860-657-9197, riverviewfarmsct.com, robbsfarm.com.

Bethanne Couture of Riverview Farms said that her dad, Bill Dufford, had the idea to get the popular pumpkin bounce.

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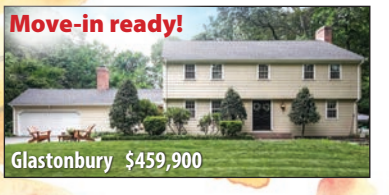

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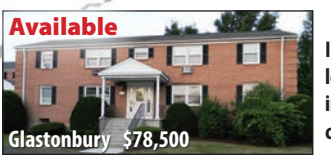

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COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

"Superman" honored

Chris Robbins is the town's teacher of the year

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

Chris Robbins has taken an unusual path to a career as an award-winning elementary school teacher.

Robbins, who majored in economics at the University of Connecticut, worked in international finance at the Phoenix Companies in Hartford. It was while he was working there that he discovered his calling.

"I enjoyed it," he said. "It was a lot of work. I was married with no kids. I was a little supervisor-type person."

Robbins, this year's teacher of the year, started training other employees, and the company eventually paid for him to earn a master's degree in education at the University of Saint Joseph. "They thought it would help," he said. "The rest is history."

"As soon as I got certified I responded to an ad in the paper that said Glastonbury was looking for a teacher for fifth grade. It's been wonderful."

He's in his 25th year and has always taught fifth-graders. "They're old enough to know things and want to learn about things," he said.

His first assignment was at Hopewell Elementary School, where he worked for about eight years. Then he moved to Gideon Welles School when fifth grades were reassigned there for about eight years. "They put them in a corner," he said of his time at the predominantly sixth-grade school. "They were fabulous years. He's been teaching at Nayaug Elementary School since the school opened about nine years ago.

Nayaug Principal Kristine Garofalo has worked with Robbins for the past two and a half years. She praised him for his grace and humility and for his expertise as an educator.

Courtesy photo

Chris Robbins, known to his students at Nayaug Elementary School as Superman, is the town's teacher of the year.

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"When I reflect on his invaluable presence in our school, it is clear that the staff, students and families, as well as the educational vision for the school, are all positively impacted by him," she wrote in a letter recommending him for recognition as Connecticut's teacher of the year. She said his lessons are well organized, present opportunities for children of varying abilities and interests, and focus on big ideas.

"Chris quickly establishes strong rapport with the students and family members, and his positive, caring approach to each individual promotes a rich learning environment for all. ... Chris has proven to be a deeply respected teacher who is reflective in his practice and settles for nothing but success for every student in his care. This is a core belief that Chris lives by. He will go to any length to connect with every student in his class in order to create an environment where students strive to succeed. Even when his students face challenges, whether academically or socially, they all know Mr. Robbins is their number one cheerleader and supporter. He even goes so far to connect and get to know every student in the youngest grades to start building a foundation of trusting relationships. For Chris, quality education is a right and a priority for every student. He demonstrates sound knowledge of the needs and services for all learners, including those requiring special education, challenge and enrichment, and those requiring supportive educational plans."

"He exemplifies everything that is right about public education."

– Superintendent Alan Bookman

"He exemplifies everything that is right about public education," said school Superintendent Alan Bookman.

"He exemplifies everything that is right about public education. Students in his class love coming to school every day. Learning is an exciting adventure in which students are participants, not simply receivers of information. Chris motivates every student who enters his classroom."

Bookman praised Robbins for his technological expertise, especially in helping students use iPads in the classroom.

"We brought Chris to a board of education meeting years ago to show the Board how technology was being used by his fifth grade students. I always considered that demonstration a turning point for our board of education. I remember them telling me this is what education could and should be," he said. "When a decision was made a year ago to buy one-to-one tablets (iPads) for every elementary school student in the district, I believe the Board had Chris in mind. Needless to say, Chris has been a leader in using the tablets in his classroom. In addition, he has been a mentor for all the Nayaug teachers, as well as teachers in other elementary schools."

Bookman also cited Robbins' ability to motivate students and help them love learning and his willingness to accept leadership positions at Nayaug and in the district in general.

Along the way Robbins has become known as Superman.

"Twenty-five years ago, in my first class, someone brought me a Superman figurine," he said. "Now I have thousands. The younger kids all call me Superman."

What's the best part of this Superman's job? Easy. The kids. "Every year watching the kids grow from September through June makes it very worthwhile," he said.

Among the challenges are curriculum changes that require constant professional development and changes in the classroom. "But not anything that's not overcome-able," he said. "It's hard. It's a hard job, but the rewards certainly outweigh the challenges." **GL**

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‘When you have a passion, you can’t let go of it’

Roy Wrenn returns to art again and again

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

When Roy Wrenn was a young married man living in Fairfield County and working for IBM, he was looking for a way to destress.

“Everybody was playing tennis and racquetball. I’m totally uncoordinated. I needed something to escape in once in a while, and that became art,” he said.

He began to take lessons at places such as the Silvermine Arts Center and joined the Rowayton Art Center.

Although he enjoyed it, he didn’t always find the time to pursue his hobby.

Roy Wrenn works out of a loft studio in his home.

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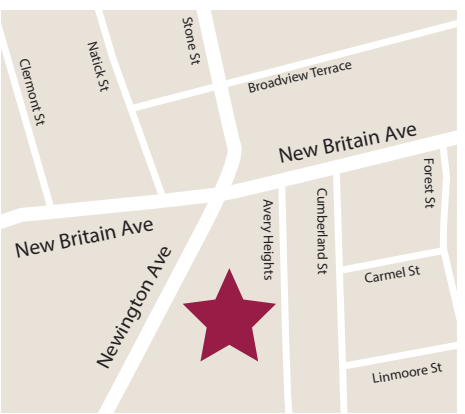

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Courtesy photo

"As the kids got older, my ability to paint got less. Painting became big brushes doing dining rooms and living rooms," he said with a chuckle.

He got back into a bit when he and his wife, Jean, to whom he's been married for 43 years, were living in Atlanta, but life's demands often got in the way.

They moved to Glastonbury more than three decades ago.

"Probably for the first 20 years, I didn't do anything [with art]," Wrenn said. "Then maybe 15 years ago, I started doing it more. The kids were out of college at that point. For me things got quiet, I had a little more time. I started painting; I joined the art association. I started taking lessons. About eight years ago, I thought if I really am going to get any good, I need to challenge myself. I started with the summer art show in Glastonbury. I have been doing that ever since."

Wrenn, who worked most of his career in sales, marketing or consulting, continues to work, now on a part-time basis for William Raveis, where he gets to put his creativity to use with home staging.

"I picked up real estate since some friends of mine are doing it. It keeps me off the streets. When you throw a passion for art into something, no matter what you do, I gravitate to things that require that kind of creativity. Throughout my high-tech years, I did marketing and finding creative ways to get people to view things. The bulk of what I'm doing in real estate is staging," Wrenn said. He works about one day a week for them.

He's also put a new focus on his art.

"A couple of years ago, I really started trying to my sell paintings. It's been slow but it's been growing," he said. "It was one of those things where I needed to put myself out there. You don't get better until you're criticized, in some respects. In the last couple of years, things seem to be picking up a lot."

Roy Wrenn's "Block Island Sunrise" is a 16 x 20 acrylic.

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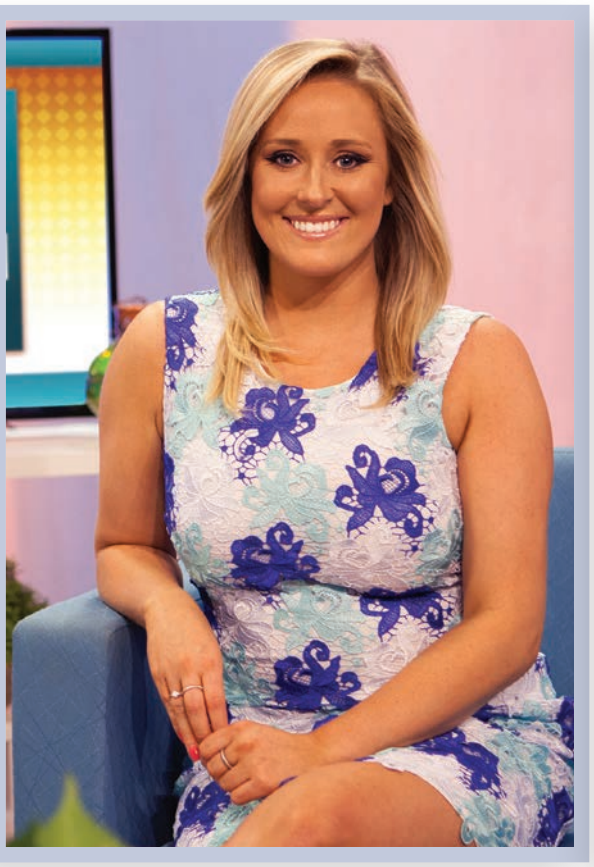

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Courtesy photo

Roy Wrenn often paints water scenes, such as "Time To Relax."

He's sold work through a gallery in Old Lyme and his work is now being carried in Images Art Gallery in Briarcliff Manor, New York.

"I am attracted to the clarity of his vision and his strong shapes. His compositions are very architectural and pleasing. Now we see what happens," Marie Alpert, owner, said.

Wrenn often paints landscapes and seascapes.

"My whole life has been involved in water. I grew up in a waterfront area. I went to a maritime college. I spent five years in the Merchant Marines. I like the appeal of anything nautical," he said. "I like to paint things that give me a feeling of peace or quiet."

But he doesn't limit himself.

"A few years ago, I got hooked on the Brooklyn Bridge. My daughter lives near there. I did six or seven paintings [of it]," he said, including one that won an award in an art show. "For me it was very different painting than I had done up to that point."

He also did the animal mural in Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique, which he originally painted when she was in Fox Run Mall.

"It's so nice to see though that she carried it over to the new location" on Main Street, he said.

While he's been putting a renewed emphasis on his work, Wrenn acknowledged that he's always had an interest in art.

"I've been drawing pictures from the time I can remember. I could draw the best car pictures when I was a teenager. Or when I was younger, I would draw car pictures, boat pictures," he recalled. "I think it was one of those things where everybody would look at the pictures I had done, and say, 'He's so talented. Too bad because you can't make any money in art.' If I had not listened to them, it might have been different, because at the time, I didn't know anyone who could make money in art. For me, it was always

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Artist Roy Wrenn has painted several versions of New York's Freedom Tower.

something I could run to when I needed the satisfaction of accomplishing something. I brought art into everything I did professionally. At one point I was teaching sales presentations and we used a lot of my graphics. It's always been there. I think when you have a passion, you can't let go of it. Every time you run away from it, it pulls you back."

Today, he paints in a loft studio in his home, where he tends to focus on acrylics.

"Over the years I've been all over the place. I started with oils back in the 70s, then I did a lot of watercolor work back in the early 80s. It was pretty much oils and water," he said. "When I came to Glastonbury and started painting, I tended to bounce between oils and acrylics, probably heavier on acrylics. I'm finding when I look at some of my paintings, I can't remember which was which. I tend to paint in the same way. In some cases, I use oil over acrylics."

Wrenn enjoys listening to books on tape while he paints, especially mysteries from authors, such as James Patterson, Clive Cussler and Robert Parker.

He often goes in search of inspiration with his wife.

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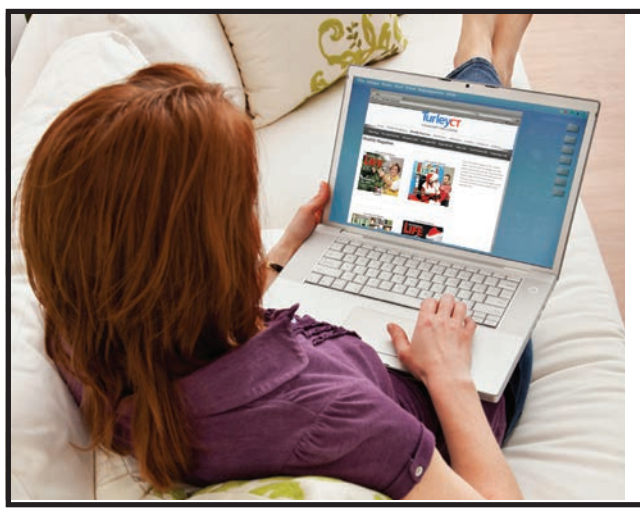

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"Jeannie and I will go out for drives along shore, looking for aha moments, this is something I want to paint," he said. "I'm all over the place as far as most of my work tends to be realistic rather than abstract. The subject matter can be anything from the Freedom Tower in New York to a beach shack in Massachusetts to sunrise or sunset."

He'll often take a number of photographs to bring back to his studio to use as reference as he works.

Ken Kelly of Glastonbury is a fan of his work.

"He has a gift. When he draws a building or a bridge, it almost comes to life. The seascapes, the way he does the ocean, he puts life into it," Kelly said.

Wrenn is also known for his photography project of the Doors of Glastonbury, which has included posers and notecards. The project started about 11 years ago.

"I had gotten a dog, a little cockapoo named Maggie. I would walk dog out to Main Street up to Daybreak [Coffee Roasters], back to Hubbard [Street] or so and home. When you're walking through the historic district, you're struck by the doors, particularly when the holiday season comes along, so I started taking pictures of the doors. Like everybody else, I would take pictures and they would never see the light of day," Wrenn said.

"I like to paint things that give me a feeling of peace or quiet."
– Roy Wrenn

That is until Christmas of 2006 when he was looking for a unique gift. He took a number of the photos and called it "Christmas in Glastonbury" and gave them to a couple of friends.

"When you're dealing with friends, they love everything. They said, 'You ought to do these,'" he remembered. "As the weather got warmer, I took some more and came up with the 'Doors of Glastonbury,'" which he copyrighted in 2007.

A few years later, some real estate friends asked if he could do custom versions to give as housewarming gifts.

"One thing led to another and it started to become a paying sideline," he said.

He often donates them for charity auctions and they are popular at art shows as well.

"They tend to be appealing to people. Over the years I've probably done hundreds of them that are sitting around Glastonbury in various homes. One neighborhood decorated early for Christmas so I could do the homes; that was a lot fun."

Wrenn tries to work on his art every day, whether for a half-hour or half a day. He enjoys seeing how a painting evolves as he works.

"I don't think it's any different than the feeling of seeing a child grow up, although it's certainly a lot shorter time frame, seeing something you love come out of it. When you use the comparison to children, you have frustrations on both sides. You've got to get past this point; you've got to work harder at this point," he mused.

He hopes to convey the calm that he feels in his subjects.

"I haven't really been able to master the 'make a statement' kind of art. At times I want to move in that direction," he said. "My statements have been peace and quiet rather than anything else. I want that somebody looks at it and says, 'Wow, it feels good.'" **GL**

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Garbage men and banana peels

Long-time resident's play to be performed in October

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Long-time resident Danny Coyle's play "Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago." is being performed in October. The play was a collaboration with former town resident Mike Wisnieuski, who now lives in Colorado.

Coyle has been involved in theater in one way or the other for 50 years, acting in more than 100 plays, with groups including Little Theatre of Manchester, Suffield Players, Theater Newington, Phoenix Theater Company and Hole in the Wall Theater. He's performed with the Ivoryton Playhouse working with Ron Palillo in "Inherit the Wind" and more recently in "Comedy is Hard" with Joyce DeWitt, formerly of "Three's Company" and Micky Dolenz of The Monkees.

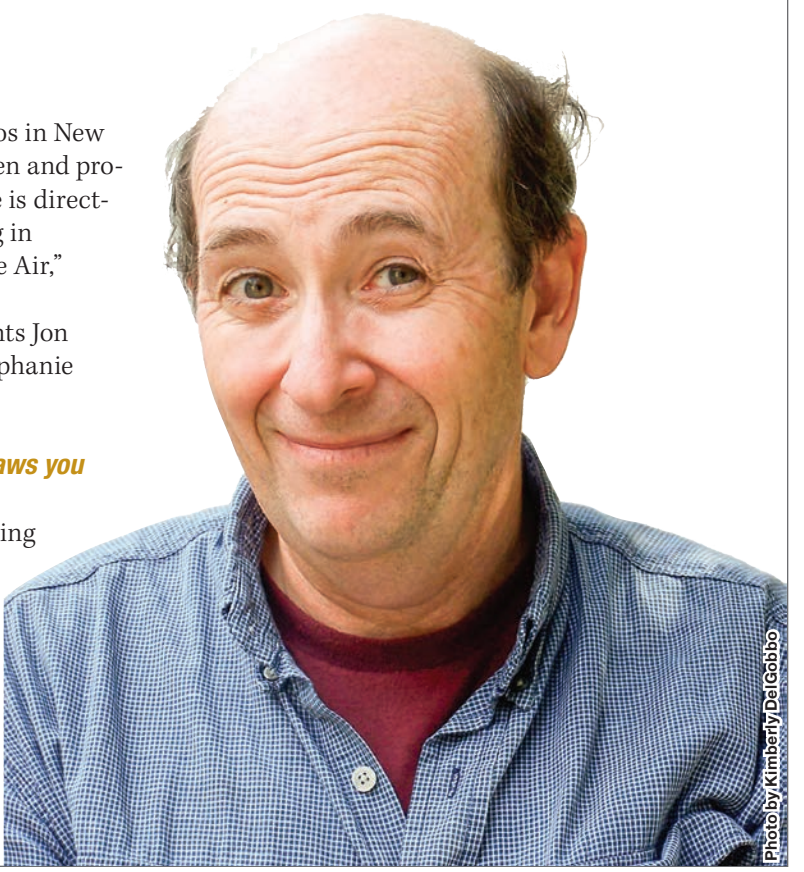
He's done about 100 murder mysteries and has directed for numerous groups in the area. He's appeared in several independent films, including as Grandpa in "Grandpa is a Weirdo" and as Dr. Lumus in "Haddonfield Hills."

He's taught improvisation, acting, radio and scene study for The Arts at the Capital Theater in Willimantic and has taught programs for other schools from second through 12th grades. He's had many part-time jobs as everything from a lobsterman to a grave digger.

Coyle, who has studied at Weist-Barron Studios in New York City, has written and produced two films. He is directing as well as acting in "Garbage Men of the Air," which also features Glastonbury residents Jon Harrington and Stephanie Natarajan.

Q. What is it that draws you to acting?

A. I first started acting when I was in seventh grade. In fact, I appeared in a play that



Danny Coyle has acted in more than 100 plays.

Photo by Kimberly Del Gobbo

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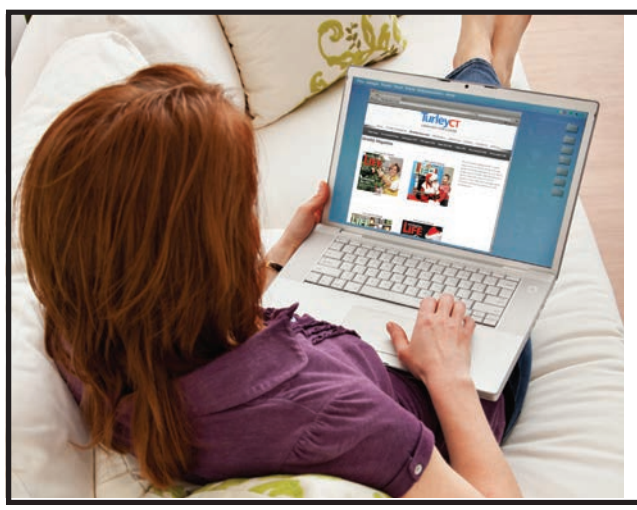
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my friends Ted Enik and Kip Rosser wrote called "This Is the Life." It was my friend Ted who got me into this!

Acting is a passion. I really feel everyone should have a passion for something even if it's mounting dead bugs on a wall, whatever. Your passion will carry you through a lot of trials and tribulations in your life. The thing I love about acting is that you get to put yourself in other beings' shoes. It's also the camaraderie. When you're acting and everything is going right, especially when you're so into a scene with another actor, it's a feeling you can't get from anything else. You get absorbed into the moment and if you performed it right, you are completely unaware that there is an audience. You are that person, that character in that time, relating with the other character. It's a sort of a high that comes naturally and when the audience appreciates it and shows your appreciation, well, it's something that you just have to experience.

I enjoy the learning and researching, or building a back story about your character. Doing something that you in your life wouldn't perhaps experience. If your character has to ride a horse, you learn how to horseback ride. If your character has to skydive, you learn to skydive. Acting also takes you to levels of emotional experience that you might never experience in your regular life. It lets you feel new emotions. Also every play, every show is different. You may do the show a couple of times but play different parts.

I've been in the play "Arsenic and Old Lace" many times and I've played many different characters in that show from the Irish Officer O'Hara to the menacingly evil Jonathan to even the kind and comical Aunt Martha! Each show is different [because] each cast is different. This is fun because you get to see different interpretations by different actors.

Q. How did you get started with playwriting?

A. My first play that I wrote was "The Giant Rat of Sumatra." It was a Sherlock Holmes play about a case that was only mentioned by Dr. Watson in passing in one of the Sherlock Holmes stories. I incorporated H.G. Wells in the storyline because he was around the time of Sherlock Holmes and wrote about the possibility of genetics being introduced way back then. In fact, there was experimentation with it in the early 1890s. I also brought into the storyline a French scientist by the name of Moreau so as to maybe explain where H.G. Wells came up with his idea for his book "The Island of Dr. Moreau."

It was received well by the Sherlock Holmes Society and many of the Sherlockians attended, some from as far away as Virginia. And at an annual dinner of the Sherlock Holmes Society, I was presented with an award "For keeping green the memory of Sherlock Holmes," the only person outside their group who has ever been presented by that award. Also I was able to convince George Athanson, the former mayor of Hartford to be in it, portraying Professor Moriarty. He was a hoot!

Photo by Bill Dougal

Danny Coyle estimates that he's been involved with theater for about 50 years. His play "Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago," which he is also directing and acting in, is being performed here in October.

Q. Tell me about "Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago."

A. "Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago" was inspired by the original Star Trek T.V. series starring William Shatner. Mike and I were really big Star Trek fans and we thought it would be fun to write a comedy about a crew of space travelers.

"Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago" is about the former captain of a starship that has been demoted to being a captain of a Garbage Scow that goes from planet to planet collecting garbage. It seems that garbage is becoming a larger problem later on. He is surrounded by a crew of crazy, wacky, zany characters who basically drive him crazy and an alien crew member from the planet of Ishkaba, who is very different. They also discover another bizarre character they find in their garbage bin, who come to find out has been thrown away but yet becomes a member of the crew. Well, this crazy group of space travelers runs into one funny, offbeat situation after another.

It actually is a combination of the early Star Trek series mixed with Monty Python's quest for the Holy Grail. Each rehearsal, we have we ended up laughing our fool heads off. We actually seem to add more and more bizarre reactions and funny moments to the story. It really is hilarious and one of the most fun shows I've ever been in.

Q. What's your writing process like?

A. A lot of time listening to some music makes me think about how a scene might play out or brings that emotion, whatever one it might be, forth. Sometimes I'll just walk and think, in the woods or on the beach, and sometimes something I see or someone will spark an idea. Sometime, they just come to me.

Q. What do you walk people to experience when they come see "Garbage Men of the Air"?

A. I want them to walk away with sore sides from laughing so much and forgetting their worries and the worries of this old world around to enjoy one of the greatest pleasure of life: to laugh! And also to enjoy the characters and camaraderie of the cast and crew of the U.S.S. Hopeless. And yes, there is a beautiful message that they will carry away with them, but I'm not going to spoil it. **GL**

"Garbage Men of the Air" or "It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago" will be performed October 13, 14, 20 and 21 at 8 p.m. at the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, 949 Main Street. For tickets and information, call 860-993-3371. If available, tickets will be sold at the door.

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Apple Harvest Festival planned again

This year's Glastonbury Apple Harvest Festival, considered by many to be one of the top annual events of its kind in the state, is being touted as the biggest and best in its 43-year history.

The festival, sponsored by the CT River Chamber of Commerce, will run October 13 through 15 on the lawn of the Riverfront Community Center on Welles Street.

The details in brief

Glastonbury Apple Harvest Festival

October 13, 6 to 10 p.m.
October 14, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
October 15, noon to 5 p.m.
Riverfront Community Center lawn
$5 per person, no charge for children three feet tall and less
For more information:
crvchamber.org or the chamber office, 860-659-3587 or
GlastonburyAppleHarvestFest on Facebook

Angry Orchard 5K road race: October 15

Bib pickup and registration 8:15 a.m.
5K run/walk 9:30 a.m., Kids' fun run 10 a.m.
Starts and ends at Riverfront Park
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As it has for the past few years, the weekend will feature three stages with 30 bands offering live entertainment throughout the day and evening with special appearances Saturday by the Glastonbury Dance Center at 11:30 a.m. and the Mulcahy Academy of Irish Dance at 2:30 p.m., and Sunday by the Glastonbury High School choir at 1:15 p.m.

Other performers scheduled to appear include Connecticut State Troubadour Kate Callahan Saturday at 3:30 p.m. on the Welcome Stage,

Signature Sounds Recordings artist Heather Maloney Saturday at 6:45 on the Harvest Pub Stage, nationally acclaimed, award-winning blues act the Balkun Brothers Friday at 8:30 p.m. on the Harvest Pub Stage and local musician Jake Kulak and the Lowdown Saturday at 6 p.m. on the Welcome Stage.

The festival also will include amusement rides, fireworks, a variety of food from 20 food trucks and other vendors, the Harvest Pub beer and wine garden, and more than 100 vendor booths, as well as the Angry Orchard 5K road race, along with a kids' fun run and a bicycle scavenger hunt Sunday morning.

Participants in the bicycle event will ride around town on bike-friendly roads and look for secret pit-stops where they will collect tickets to enter into prize drawings.

Eligible entrants in the 5K race will receive free admission to the festival on Sunday, a complimentary Angry Orchard cider in the festival pub at noon, a souvenir pint glass and an Angry Orchard T-shirt.

The fee for runners and walkers in the 5K event at 9:30 a.m. is $30; there is no charge for the kids' fun run at 10 a.m.

Free shuttle bus service will run through the day and evening from Glastonbury High School.

Service animals are welcome, but no pets will be allowed on festival grounds. **GL**

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Your thoughts

Fewer hours of daylight and colorful pots of mums mean that summer's definitely in the rearview mirror. Rather than focus on the loss of those long summer evenings – sigh – Glastonbury LIFE thought we'd find out what people love about fall.

Here's some of what you said:

Sailing in the fall. That's because the water is warm and you get good winds and there's not a lot of people.
– Rick Benson

The weather! Being able to get outside and enjoy the weather and walk and take pictures.
– Lisa Zimmerman

It's cooler weather; it's not muggy. I don't like it when it's real hot. You get a lot more work done around the yard without getting all sweaty.
– Robert Blagusesky

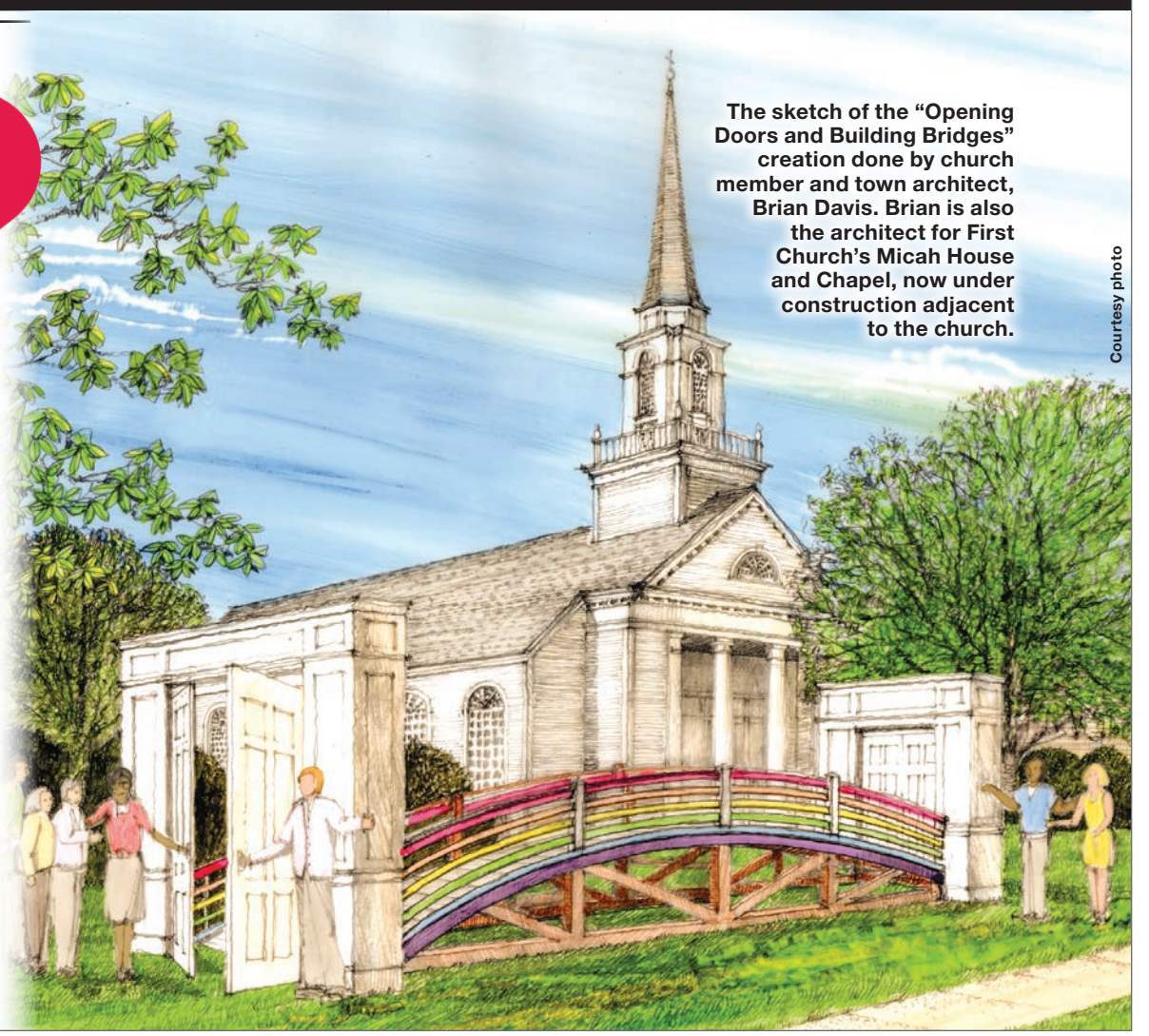
‘Love is in our DNA’

First Church builds ‘rainbow bridge’ as a symbol of theme of ‘Opening Doors and Building Bridges’

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

In a world that seems to be increasingly divisive, First Church on Main Street practices something they refer to as “extravagant hospitality.”

“To us, extravagant hospitality means warmly welcoming everyone who crosses our threshold: those new to the community or long-established, people who have fallen away from organized religion but are seeking renewal, those who need a safe



The sketch of the “Opening Doors and Building Bridges” creation done by church member and town architect, Brian Davis. Brian is also the architect for First Church’s Micah House and Chapel, now under construction adjacent to the church.

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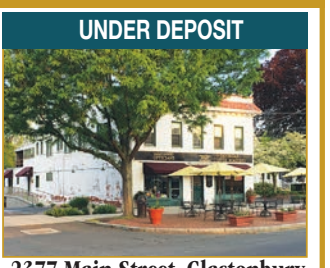

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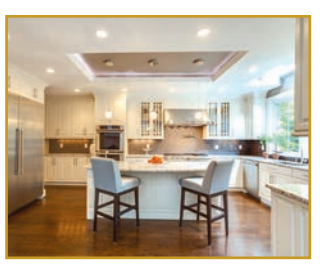

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place to ask hard questions and express doubts, and of course people from the LGBTQ community who seek acceptance and love. There is no judging here. I like to say we meet people wherever they are along their life and faith journey and we travel with them," said Diana Ruddick, a Glastonbury resident who is president of the congregation at First Church.

That welcome extends beyond the four walls of the church.

Other United Church of Christ congregations in New England have displayed rainbow-colored doors on their front lawns with the words, "God's Doors Are Open to All!" While First Church wanted to convey that concept, they also wanted to take it further, to convey a message of building bridges.

"Day in and day out, this family of faith, this beloved community we call First Church, shares God's love with one another and with a world that is often hurting. God's world hurts when doors are closed, when walls are built, when hearts are closed, when communities are divided, when nations are at war or threatening war, when children are dying in Africa dying from starvation, when children across the river are hungry – hungry for food, hungry for education, hungry for hope. We believe we are called to build bridges of hope and compassion to one another and to the world," said David Taylor, one of the pastors at First Church.

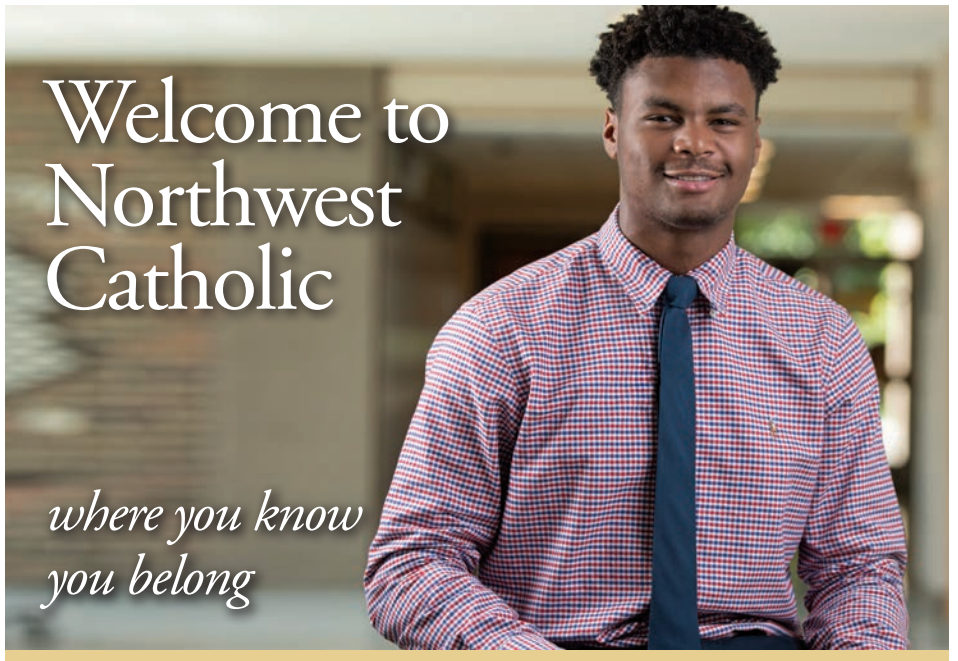
Each year, First Church picks a theme for the upcoming program year. The theme for 2017-2018 is "Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly with God – Opening Doors and Building Bridges!"

The Biblical mandate to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God" is from the Biblical prophet Micah.

For a fourth year in a row, in late August First Church spread its "extravagant welcome" with a postcard mailed to all postal patrons in Glastonbury and Wethersfield. Keith Miller, a church member and ESPN graphic designer, created the postcard. The church stresses that all are welcome, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, social class, ethnicity, background or ability.

"At the beginning of a Sunday morning service, David and I often begin with this welcome: 'Here we celebrate all of God's children – young, old and in-between; male, female and in-between; gay, lesbian, straight and in-between; the assured, the doubting and the in-between; the optimistic, the cynics and the in-between; the creative, the practical and the in-between.' We say these words. We believe these words, and as individuals and as a community, we try to live out these words," said Kate VanDerzee-Glidden, one of the pastors.

As a visual display of the church's ideals, the church has built a rainbow-colored bridge, linked by doors, which will be on the meetinghouse lawn for about a month. Church member and Glastonbury architect Brian Davis drew the sketch of the doors and bridge, while First Church's facilities manager Wes Grove constructed the 12-foot-long and 8-foot-high creation. A group of "rainbow painters" put on the finishing touches for the



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installation date of September 8, in time for the church's Homecoming Sunday service and picnic with Ross Tucker and the Hot Cat Jazz Band.

"We hope that people who walk, run or drive by First Church as they go to work, to school or to do their daily errands will notice the doors and bridge and know that they are welcome to visit First Church and to perhaps participate in our programs and our outreach. We are a joy-filled community that invites all in and then reaches out in love," VanDerzee-Glidden said.

First Church is currently restoring and building a "Micah House and Chapel" at the 1714 Thomas Hale Homestead next door to the church. In the spring as a part of the congregation's 325th anniversary year, the Micah House and Chapel will be dedicated to the work of doing justice and lovingkindness.

"When we first started exploring the idea of a temporary installation of 'rainbow doors,' it immediately struck a chord. What a great

Wes Grove, facilities manager at First Church, works on constructing the door and bridge creation.

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"We hope to open the doors, not just inward to our church, but outward for our church, for our church to go out in the community and world, and address the problems of hunger, homelessness, education, addiction, loneliness, helplessness. Unfortunately the list continues, but our faith is strong."

– Dan Martin

opportunity to show people what we stand for -- opening doors and building bridges – and stimulate conversation, while reinforcing our theme for the coming year. It makes a perfect prelude to opening the Micah House and Chapel next spring and celebrating 325 years as a beacon on Main Street," Ruddick said.

First Church is involved in a number of community outreach projects that build bridges, such as participating in the work of Foodshare and the Hartford Food System; cooking meals and babysitting for those in need; sponsoring a Syrian refugee family; mentoring and tutoring elementary school children in Hartford; collecting emergency relief funds for those enduring the tragedy of famine in East Africa; helping area families to set up apartments with furnishings, clothing and toys; collecting backpacks and school supplies for children; and participating in housing rehab efforts in Hartford.

"First Church is always seeking out ways to act out our faith, whether it's undertaking mission projects at home or outside our region, addressing food insecurity, or raising money to help support a child in Haiti or Africa. When the need is uncovered, the congregation responds generously with time and treasure. Love is in our DNA; especially in these times when hate rears its ugly head, we are steadfast in our belief that in the end love wins," Ruddick said. "Many people, myself included, refer to First Church as a family, because that's what it feels like."

Church Vice President Dan Martin of Glastonbury said it's important to note that the doors symbolically go in both directions.

"We hope to open the doors, not just inward to our church, but outward for our church, for our church to go out in the community and world, and address the problems of hunger, homelessness, education, addiction, loneliness, helplessness. Unfortunately the list continues, but our faith is strong," Martin said.

Taylor said that the time is right for the project.

"Over the last nine months, we have experienced an increase in church attendance and visitors. We believe people are looking for communities of hope, peace and involvement," he said. "It is our hope that all who walk or drive by First Church may truly know of our congregation's steadfast commitment to do our best to help make this world a little more just, a little more peaceful, and a little more loving for all of God's children." **GL**

First Church of Christ Congregational is at 2183 Main Street, 860-633-4641, glastonburyfirst.org.

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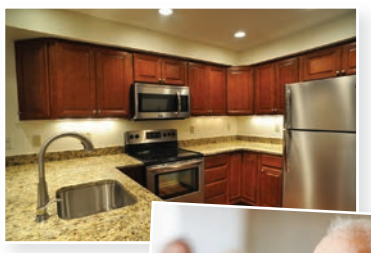

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Photo by Tania Palermo Photography

Dr. Bridget Cooper tells her story in new book

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

'No matter what pain you've been through, you can and you must make a difference.'

When Bridget Cooper was pregnant with her second child, she had a stroke.

"They weren't sure if I was going to live or if she was going to live. It put my life in sharp focus. I realized I needed to own my own career and I needed to work when I wanted to how I wanted to," said Cooper, who was living in the Washington, D.C. area at the time. "I thought, 'Is this it?' Is this the way the last few hours, weeks, months of life looked? And when I didn't like what it looked like, when I didn't feel like I'd left enough of myself behind in this world, I changed that. It was a powerful experience. It led to my divorce; it led to my own company; it led to my move here; it led to a lot of things."

Cooper, who has her M.A. in marriage and family therapy from the University of Connecticut and a doctorate in education through the educational leadership program at the George Washington University, started teaching adult and continuing education classes, as well as

Bridget Cooper decided to start her own business after suffering a stroke when she was pregnant with her second child. She's just published her fifth book.

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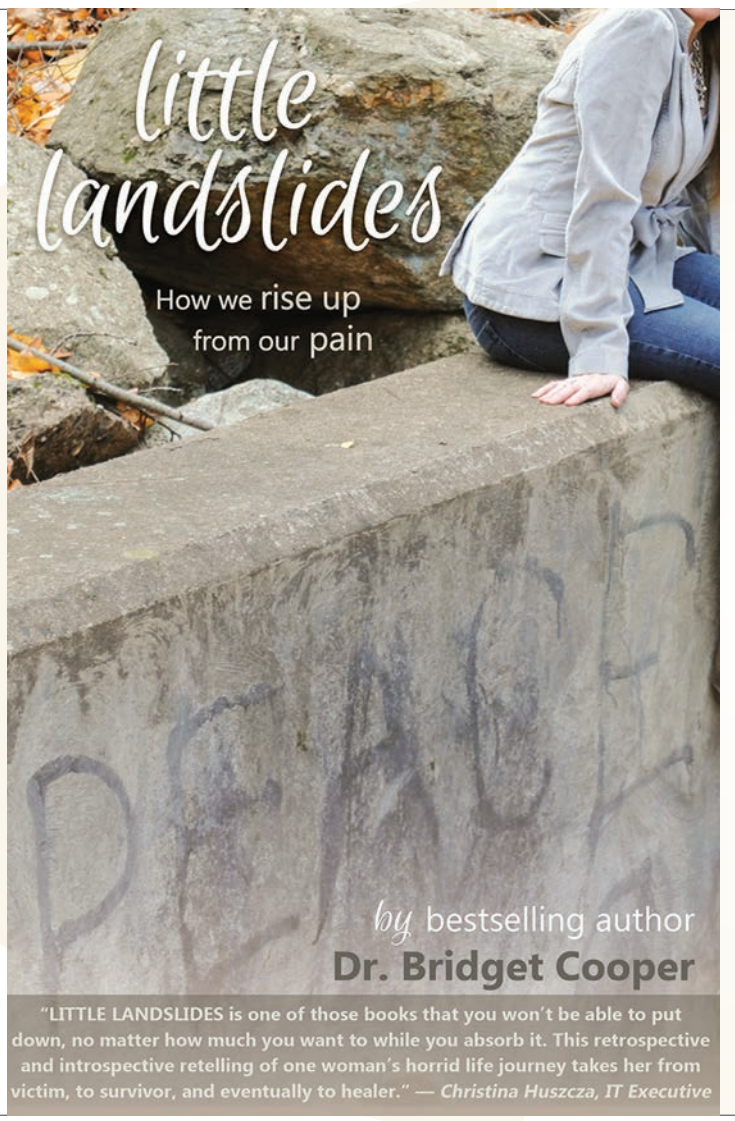
little landslides
How we rise up from our pain
by bestselling author
Dr. Bridget Cooper
"LITTLE LANDSLIDES is one of those books that you won't be able to put down, no matter how much you want to while you absorb it. This retrospective and introspective retelling of one woman's horrid life journey takes her from victim, to survivor, and eventually to healer." — Christina Huszcza, IT Executive

"Little Landslides" is the story of Dr. Bridget Cooper's early life and provides a blueprint for rising above difficult times.

working with her first clients.

"I came from this place of I need to work how I want to work in a way I want to work. So I jumped," Cooper, who goes by "Dr. B," said. "The core of my business is working with leaders and teams on communicating more effectively; aligning their culture to their mission, vision and goals; helping people be better leaders by being better people; understanding themselves and their company so they can serve clients better, both internal and external. That's been the bread and butter of my business for years."

About 10 years ago she decided it was time to move back to Connecticut.

"I lived in D.C. during 9/11. My first daughter was born before 9/11. We had the sniper; we had anthrax. The environment for me in that area and the environment in my home became very hostile and oppressive. I wanted to raise my kids in New England and further from that environment with good schools, with idyllic country, suburban mixed with a setting where they could really focus on being kids," she said.

Her children are both now students at Glastonbury High School,

She also began writing books, coming out with "Feed The Need" (2013), "Feed The Need: Teen Edition" (2014), "Stuck U" (2015) and "Power Play" (2016).

"Three of the past four books were aimed at giving a manual to people I worked with or people I couldn't reach because they were too far. They're a vehicle to help people, some who I've never met, to look at communication, to look at conflict, to look at change, to look at the dynamics in their companies that are killing their culture," she said.

Her most recent book, "Little Landslides," comes from an entirely different place.

"About a year ago I got presented with a sign that it was time to tell my personal story to help people on a different level, outside of the corporate world," she noted. "There are people who have known my story over the years and understood where my passion for groups, individuals and companies come

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from. It's such a deep concern and passion for helping people get out of their own way. Some people have known where that comes from and some people haven't. I've talked to some people about their 'rough upbringing,' in quotes. Last year, I saw a picture of an abused child come through on my Facebook feed and something about that picture said I have to speak up and talk about how you move forward from pain that threatens to submerge you so I wrote the book last summer. I took a long time pondering whether I was ready to put into the world. I had almost 40 people read it before publication so I could get a sense of their response and reaction to it. My intention was not to attract compassion for me; it was to invite compassion for themselves and other people, and also not traumatize people who may have already been traumatized. I took a lot of feedback. I took a lot of care and concern in how I wrote it to be honest and raw, and to be caring at same time. It tells my story of pain but also because I'm Dr. B., the end of the book is a guide on how do you rise up through that pain. How do you make the pain better once you've seen the dark side? I couldn't leave that part out; it not what I do."

Cooper is a survivor of sexual assault, child rape, incest, child abuse, and mental illness and addiction in her caregivers. She tells each story in the first person, and then writes

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October Events

Part-Time Job Fair. 10/3, 10 a.m., AST Rotunda. Approximately 25 companies will be promoting a wide range of part-time positions offering flexible hours. Job seekers are encouraged to wear appropriate dress and have resumes handy. Info: Julie Greene at 860-512-3372 or email jgreene@manchestercc.edu.

Effective Resume Writing. 10/4 and 10/18, 12:30 p.m., SSC L107. Improve your visibility in the job market. This workshop will provide information on the skills and strategies needed to develop a resume that gets positive response from employers. Info: Julie Greene at 860-512-3372 or email jgreene@manchestercc.edu.

Campus Visits. SSC Atrium. Regional representatives will be on campus to discuss transfer opportunities. Info: Stephanie Swantek at 860-512-3306 or email sswantek@manchestercc.edu.

Bay Path University. 10/9, 10 a.m.

Central Connecticut State University. 10/12, 10 a.m.

Western New England University. 10/16, 10 a.m.

FAFSA Help. 10/10 and 10/24, 4 p.m.; 10/12 and 10/26, 10 a.m., SSC L177. Please bring the following: FAFSA ID (username and password), your parent(s) 2015 tax return and W2 (if filed and you are a dependent student), your 2015 tax return and W2 (if you filed), and you and your parent(s) SSN, DOB and marital status. Info: Tracey Deptula at 860-512-3387 or email thadden-deptula@manchestercc.edu.

Interviewing Tips. 10/11 and 10/25, 12:30 p.m., SSC L107. Job seekers will gain insight into frequently asked interview questions and other tips that can help lead to a successful interview. Info: Julie Greene at 860-512-3372 or email jgreene@manchestercc.edu.

The Common Read Presents "A Discussion of Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*" (Chapters 1-4). 10/12, 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., GPA Community Commons. Join Andrew Sottile, instructor of English, for a discussion of the first four chapters of this year's Common Read, Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. Bring your books! Snacks and refreshments will be provided. Info: Andrew Sottile at 860-512-2668 or email asottile@manchestercc.edu.

***Almost, Maine*.** 10/19 and 10/20, 6 p.m., SBM Charitable Foundation Auditorium. MCC OnStage is presenting John Cariani's hit show *Almost, Maine*. One of the most produced shows in the country, it is a delightful, fun look at relationships in the fictional, magical town of Almost, Maine. Starring students from MCC's Theatre Practicum class. Info: Debi Freund at 860-512-3107 or email dfreund@manchestercc.edu.

Mishi-maya-gat Spoken Word & Music Series. 10/19, 6:30 p.m., 903 Main Street, Manchester. Poet/writer Heather Treseler. 8:00 p.m., Kinetiscope String Quartet, featuring Jason Mellow and Adrianne Munden-Dixon, violins; Armande Alpyspaev, viola; and Sara Bennett Wolfe, cello; with special guest, flutist Melanie Chirignan. Info: Stephen Campiglio at 860-512-2824 or email scampiglio@manchestercc.edu.

The Empty Bowl Project. 10/21, 11 a.m., SSC Culinary Arts Center. Buy a handmade ceramic bowl and you can enjoy unlimited soups and bread. The ceramic bowl is a reminder that over 128,000 people, including over 50,000 children, experience hunger in the greater Hartford and Tolland counties. Cost is $15. Info: Kathy Kern at 860-512-2794 or email kkern@manchestercc.edu.

Community Science Lecture. 10/26, 4 p.m., AST C211. Connecticut State Archaeologist Brian Jones will give a lecture titled, "An Ice Age Odyssey: The Pope Mastodon's Epic Journey Through Life, Death, Storage Crates and Museums." His presentation will discuss the history of the remains of a mastodon uncovered on the Hill-Stead estate of Alfred A. Pope in Farmington in 1913. Info: Pamela McManus at 860-512-2738 or email pmcmanus@manchestercc.edu.

All events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted, and are subject to change without notice. For current information or notices of cancellation, click on "View All Events" on MCC's web site: www.manchestercc.edu.

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a letter back to herself in the third person from the perspective of where she is now.

"Had anyone stepped in and been that voice in that story, it probably would have prevented every subsequent story. The message is an invitation for all of us to notice the pain of others and to stand up for them in whatever small and large ways we can because the difference is life-changing," she noted.

Many of her corporate clients were unaware of her background prior to the book coming out.

"I was very concerned having it out there and putting my current and future corporate clients in an awkward position of not knowing who I was. Which is how the back end of book comes in. It shows I'm still the same Dr. B. What I've found with corporate clients who know about this book is they pull me aside and tell me how the story touched them. We are more alike than we are different," she said.

"Bridget is a courageous truth teller. She's not afraid to be vulnerable and share her experiences with the audience with the intention of reaching someone she can inspire and let them know they're not alone in their experience. Her intention is to liberate them from the secrets that may be holding them back. It is her truth telling that opens the door for people to be brave and move forward. She's in the arena with them," said Karen Senteio, president, VERVE LLC, Coaching and Consulting in Newington. "I read the book and will be profoundly changed by it. I knew Bridget before I read the book. Each chapter unveiled a story from her life. I hurt for her as a child and I cheered for her as the remarkable woman she has become. I was grateful for the letters she wrote to herself as a child at the end of each chapter. I often sat in silence at the end of many chapters. They healed the broken heart I experienced in reading each story. It made me hope that I can be as courageous in my life as Bridget is in hers. It underscored the importance of forgiveness. Not forgiving someone's actions, but forgiving the past that it can't be different and you can survive it and move powerfully forward. Write a new ending. I admire and love Bridget for being the fabulous ass kicker she is."

Cooper noted that she wouldn't have been able to write the book without having some distance on it.

"I've spent a long period of time grieving my story and doing the heavy lifting of forgiving the people who have hurt me and forgiving myself for what I did to myself in response to that experience so writing the story was far less emotional

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for me than what one might imagine. Telling the story now is really about bringing to healing to other people. That's not to say that writing it wasn't emotional," she said. "I wrote the book from the first person. I write the story as if I'm experiencing it in real time with all five senses and it evokes emotion; I have to see it through my own eyes. That part was emotional but it was more powerful than traumatizing. I could sense its power in writing it that way. If I'd try to write it 20 years ago, I probably would have needed medication and therapeutic intervention."

She knows it's not an easy read and when she speaks about the book, she's careful to ask her audiences how much they want to hear. Still, she believes these stories need to be told.

"I think people who have suffered at the hands of others often pick one of two roads. One is they suffocate in it and can't find a way out or two, they're told to get over it and have no validation in that. They either over-validate it and get stuck in it, or they under-validate it and don't get the right support. I try to offer a balance of those two things. I tell my story in an honest, real way so they would give ourselves permission to tell their own story. I know there are other people out there who have been through similar things who are not drowning in it. Because saying I had a rough upbringing is very different than saying the raw truth of what it feels like to have your parents beat you bloody in your infancy; they're very different. My rough upbringing could have meant I didn't get a pony," Cooper said with a laugh before turning serious again. "Someone else's rough upbringing could mean they got sold into slavery. When we don't speak the actual truth, it becomes a source of shame."

She is working on a new book.

"It rolls up from 'Little Landslides' and some work I've done with people about their own pain. People are coming to me more and more and sharing their pain and sharing their trauma, and finding new and deeper ways of helping them heal. The new book is about how do you let go of the things that have hurt you so can face every new challenge unweighted by that past experience," she explained.

She refers to the author Simon Sinek, who talks about the importance of having a why.

"This book, 'Little Landslides' is my why. It's why I show up at any office, at any phone call, in front of any audience. My why is showing people that no matter what pain you've been through, you can and you must make a difference while you're here," she said. "You are entitled to living a life of passion, of abundance, of joy, because that's why you were put here – no matter what got thrown in your way." **GL**

Learn more at drbridgetcooper.com.

"Last year, I saw a picture of an abused child come through on my Facebook feed and something about that picture said I have to speak up and talk about how you move forward from pain that threatens to submerge you so I wrote the book last summer."

– Dr. Bridget Cooper

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October calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

2 **Art exhibit,** Marilyn Q. Vignone Gallery, Glastonbury High School. Monday through Thursday 3 to 8 p.m. through November 15.

3 **Town plan and zoning commission,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

Habits and wildlife of the Conte Refuge, 6:30 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main Street. $5 for society members, $10 for others. Pre-registration requires. glastonbury@ctaudubon.org or 860-633-8402.

Amrutur Srinivasan discusses ancient Hindu wisdoms, 7 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury social hall. No charge. 860-633-4651.

Reception and talk by artist Judith Meyers, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Marilyn Q. Vignone Gallery, Glastonbury High School. Refreshments served. No charge.

4 **Glastonbury Farmers Market**, 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Build a Better You: Speech and Language Development, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

7 **Free paper shredding** sensitive documents for residents only. No business or commercial users. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., highway department office, 2380 New London Turnpike.

Bus trip: Connecticut wine tour, leaves East Hartford/Glastonbury commuter lot at 9:45 a.m., returns at about 6:30 p.m. $90 fee includes charter bus, wine tastings, cookout and games and prizes on the bus. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov

10 **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

11 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Glastonbury Community Action Partnership, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles St.

Decorated Halloween pumpkin contest for youths 4 to 14, 6:30 p.m., Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles St. No charge, but pre-registration is required. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

Square-dancing lesson sponsored by the Glastonbury Square Dance Club, 7 to 9 p.m., Eastbury School, 1389 Neipsic Road. No charge. 860-280-5222 or billmager@mac.com.

Caring for cats and threatened songbirds, 6:30 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $5 members, $10 non-members. Preregistration required. 860-633-8402 or ctaudubon.org.

12 **Paying for college** without going broke, program and adults and teens, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. No charge. Seating is limited and registration is requested. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

Eating for energy presented by nutritionists Jen Thomas and Evelyn DeDominics, POP Weight Loss, 6:30 p.m., 74 New London Turnpike. 860-918- 9176 or jthomas@popweightloss.com

13 **Garbagemen from Space or It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago,** 8 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Dpcoyle1@yahoo.com.

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14 **Square dance,** 8 to 10:30 p.m., Glastonbury High School, 330 Hubbard Street. No charge and no experience necessary. 860-280-5222 or billmager@mac.com.

Garbagemen from Space or It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago, 8 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Dpcoyle1@yahoo.com. Also October 14, 20 and 21.

15 **Bike Boulevard scavenger hunt,** 8 to 11 a.m. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

Bus trip: New England Patriots vs. New York Jets. Bus will leave East Hartford Glastonbury commuter lot at 7 a.m. and return at about 7:30 p.m. $199 includes upper-level end-zone seat, cookout before the game, food after the game and games and prizes on the bus. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov

Dinner in Jerusha's Kitchen, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main St. $55. 860-633-6890 or hsgct.org.

Fundraising ride to benefit metastatic breast cancer research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, 9:30 a.m., Empowered Indoor Cycling Studio, 345 New London Tpk. Empoweredstudio.com or 860-430-2170.

Chili/rice and beans cook-off to benefit St. Vincent's Center for Handicapped Children in Haiti, 5 p.m., St. James' Episcopal Church, 2584 Main St. Adults $10, children 3 to 12 $3, family of five or more (two adults only) $25. 860-633-8333.

16 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

College Fair, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Glastonbury High School gymnasium. Glastonburyus.org or 860-652-7200, ext. 1059.

17 **Town plan and zoning commission,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

Keep Up With Your Grandkids: Social Media 101, 3 p.m., Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles Street. No charge, registration is requested. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

18 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Square-dancing lesson sponsored by the Glastonbury Square Dance Club, 7 to 9 p.m., Buttonball Lane School, 376 Buttonball Lane. No charge. 860-280-5222 or billmager@mac.com.

19 **Halloween Hilarity,** holiday-themed comedy with Sea Tea Improv, 5:30 p.m. on the grounds of Somerset Square. No charge.

20 **Garbagemen from Space or It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago,** 8 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Dpcoyle1@yahoo.com. Also October 14, 20 and 21.

21 **The Hunchback of Notre Dame** starring Lon Chaney with live organ music, 7 p.m., St. Luke's Church, Main Street, South Glastonbury. $10 for adults, $7 for students and seniors with a non-perishable donation to the local food bank. 860-633-5057 or pattisivocole@gmail.com.

Garbagemen from Space or It's Raining Banana Peels in Chicago, 8 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Dpcoyle1@yahoo.com. Also October 14, 20 and 21.

22 **Colonial bread and beer,** 1 to 3 p.m., Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main St. $5 fee includes samples. 860-633-6890 or hsgct.org.

Classical guitarist Francesco Barone in concert, 2 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Seating is limited and reservations are required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

24 **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

25 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

27 **Indie Author Day,** 2 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Seating is limited and reservations are required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

28 **Green Cemetery tours,** 1 and 3 p.m., $20. Each tour is about 90 minutes long, and both are expected to sell out. Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890.

30 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

31 **Bring your own craft**, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Welles Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. No charge, 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

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Events spotlight

The Spectacular Habitats and Wildlife of the Conte Refuge

October 3, 6:30 p.m.

Connecticut Audubon Center, 1361 Main Street glastonbury@ctaudubon.org or 860-633-6842

Learn about the habitats and wildlife of the Connecticut River Watershed and the Conte Refuge at this presentation by Patrick Comins, executive director of Connecticut Audubon. The 36,000-acre refuge is considered by many to be one of the crown jewels of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Members $5, non-members $10. Pre-registration is required by emailing glastonbury@ctaudubon.org or calling 860-633-8402.

Ancient Hindu Wisdoms for a Connecticut World

October 3, 7 p.m.

Social Hall, Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, 949 Main Street, 860-633-4651

Amrutur V. Srinivasan, a mechanical engineer, former member of the town council and the author of Hinduism for Dummies and The Bhagavad Gita: A Thread through the Eighteen Gems: A Re-reading, will discuss Hindu wisdom in this free presentation sponsored by the church's adult faith enrichment team.

Green Cemetery tours

October 28, 1 and 3 p.m.

Museum on the Green, 1944 Main Street, Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890

The Historical Society of Glastonbury's event, which will include stories shared by the spirits, dressed in character, of some of the cemetery's inhabitants. Some are expected to offer eye-witness insights into some of the less-than-flattering realities of 18th- and 19th-century life. It's expected that the tours, both lasting about 90 minutes, will sell out. Hot apple cider and seasonal treats will be available. Proceeds will go toward the society's education and preservation programs.

Beer and bread demonstration

October 22, 1 to 3 p.m.

Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main St., Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890

This demonstration of colonial bread making and beer brewing will introduce quests to traditional 18th-century techniques that were used in most households. Hosts are town residents Mark Packard for bread making and Brian Jones as brew master. The house, barns and shed will be open. Admission, which includes samples, is $5. **GL**

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People notes

Local school member **Jeremy Grieveson** has been honored by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education for his years of service to the town.

Grieveson has received the designation of Certificated Board of Education Member in the association's Board Member Academy for the 2016-2017 school year. He was one of 21 school board members recognized for their participation in many hours of board-related professional development activities, including board relations with the superintendent, the community and other members, policy, curriculum, school finance, school law, labor relations and board operations.

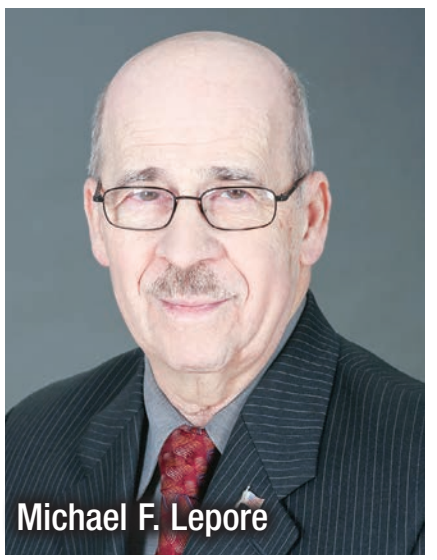
Michael F. Lepore's new book of poetry, Moral Injury: A Vietnam War Journey of Moral and Spiritual Confusion, has received a gold award from the Writers Society of America. To learn more, visit michaellepore-poetry.com.

Charles Sorensen won his second Best in Show award at the Hebron Harvest Fair for his home-brewed beer, Tripel.

Local designer **Kimberly Levin** and local builder **Larry Newquist** performed a home transformation for a family in Manchester for an episode of George-To-The-Rescue. The show aired September 23 on NBC. It can be viewed on nbcconnecticut.com.

Eun Y. Cho, Lianna Creedon, Alison Hoogewerff, Katherine M. Palomino and **Hena Zakir** have received the Robert T. Kenney Scholarship from the American Savings Foundation.

Paula Scopino Pierce, a Glastonbury resident and the owner of Sacred Rivers Yoga in East Hartford, has been awarded the designation of certified yoga therapist from the International Association of Yoga Therapy.


Michael F. Lepore

Jeremy Grieveson

Caroline Correia, Mara Cosentino and **Patrick Kilkenny** made the dean's list for the spring semester at Colgate University.

Kathleen Carney, Devin O'Reilly, Gabriella Gineo, EmilyAnne DeYoung, Nicole Cantone and **Austin Michaels** have made the dean's list at Merrimack College.

Hannah Parrott made the dean's list at Carleton College.

Joe Doyle and **Luke McNabb** graduated from Bates College.

Anna Case has earned the dean's award for academic excellence at Colgate University. GL

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Slice of LIFE

photos by Nancy Thompson

Amateur archaeologists dug and sifted at a local site as part of the Historical Society of Glastonbury's annual Archaeology Day. State Archaeologist Brian Jones, a Glastonbury resident, was on hand along with volunteers from the Friends of the State Archaeologist.

Archaeology Day

1. Alan Huot watches a demonstration of ground-penetrating radar. **2.** Noelle Avarkian and Kathleen Dudzik dig soil in hopes of finding a relic. **3.** Carol Forbes and Mary Jane Greissle fill a bucket with soil that will be sifted to check for relics. **4.** State Archaeologist Brian Jones, a Glastonbury resident, prepares the ground-penetrating radar machine for a demonstration. **5.** Diane Bliss and Hunter McMann work on their square of soil. **6.** Laura LaGelle watches a demonstration of ground-penetrating radar. **7.** Debbie Surabian explains the usefulness to archaeologists of ground-penetrating radar. **8.** Sue Vasilini, Jim Bennett and State Archaeologist Brian Jones talk during a break. **9.** Sue Vasilini holds watches a demonstration of ground-penetrating radar. **10.** Sue Smallridge and Jan Connors dig deep into the surface in search of relics. **11.** Jim Bennett, executive director of the Historical Society of Glastonbury, pours some soil into a bucket that will be sifted later. **12.** Jim Bennett, executive director of the Historical Society of Glastonbury, dumps a bucket of soil as his daughter, Sid, gets ready to sift it. **13.** Debbie Surabian adjusts the ground-penetrating radar device as Emma Schlauder gets ready to operate it. **14.** Hunter McMann takes a turn operating the ground-penetrating radar device. **15.** Marilyn March digs in the hot summer sun. **16.** Scott Brady, a volunteer with the Friends of the State Archaeologist, gets ready to put some soil through a sifter. **17.** Emma Schlauder and Ann Mitra read a newspaper account of a discovery made with ground-penetrating radar.

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News roundup

Warning on car thefts and burglaries

The Glastonbury Police Department is encouraging residents and visitors to keep their vehicles locked and their keys and fobs a safe distance from their vehicles and never to leave valuables in unlocked vehicles. The department has been investigating an increased number of car thefts and burglaries recently.

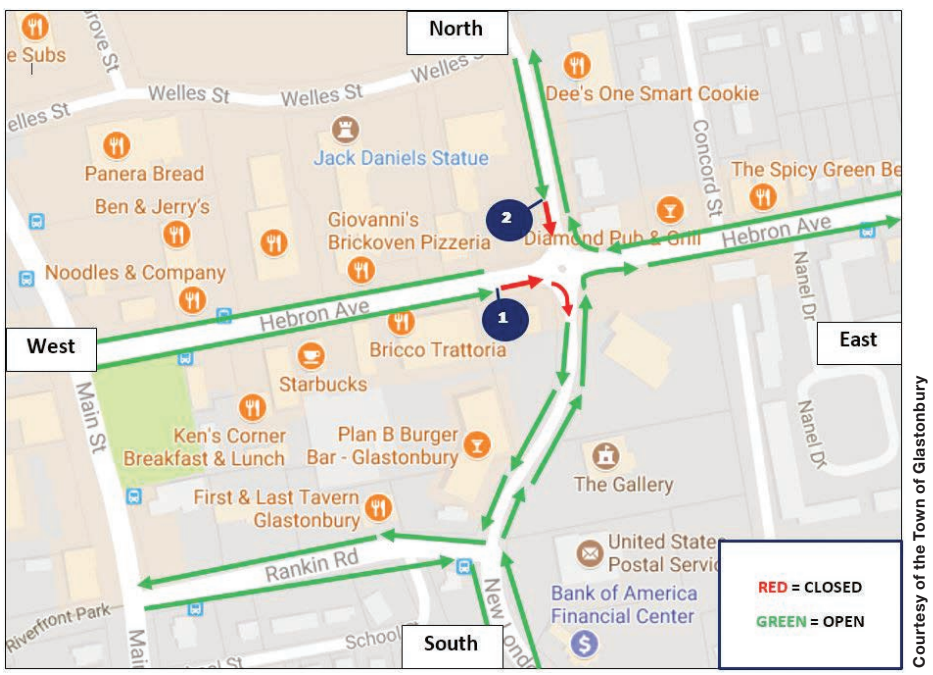
Mosquito danger

The local health department has reported that several mosquitoes trapped in town have tested positive for West Nile Virus. While these mosquitoes tend do appear during the summer, the department has reminded residents that avoiding mosquito bites at all times can prevent the disease and has suggested the following steps: using insect repellent outdoors; taking extra precautions by wearing repellent and protective clothing when outside from dusk to dawn; weather permitting, wear long sleeves, long pants and socks outside; repair torn or damaged screens in the home; and empty standing water from flower pots, gutters, buckets, pool covers or birdbaths to reduce breeding areas. To learn more, call the health department at **860-652-7534**.

Roundabout construction update

It appears that construction on the Hebron Avenue-New London Turnpike roundabout will be winding down in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, both lanes of Hebron Avenue west of the roundabout will be closed from about the Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins plaza to the intersection with New London Turnpike, and southbound lanes of New London Turnpike also we be closed.



Courtesy of the Town of Glastonbury

Town officials have hoping the construction work will be completed in late September or the first part of October. Landscaping and other work may require short-term detours after the construction is finished but will not have a sustained impact on traffic. All businesses in the affected areas will remain open.

Updates are posted on the town

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LIFE

website at glastonbury-ct.gov/roundabout. It's also possible to sign up for email notices about the work by visiting glastonbury-ct.gov/enotify and selecting the icon next to "Roundabout Construction" and clicking on "submit."

Aubudon center seeks volunteers

The local Audubon center is looking for volunteers for a variety of jobs, including phone, reception and nature store hosts, administrative help, volunteer coordination, publicity, gardening, events and animal care. Training is available. The center, at 1361 Main Street, is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Anyone who is interested may contact center Director Michelle Eckman at 860-633-8401, ext. 205, or email her at meckman@ctaudubon.org.

No smoking

The town council has passed an ordinance banning the use of tobacco at the town's recreation area, with a fine of $50 for each violation. The multi-use trail at Addison Bog and Woodlands, athletic fields, picnic areas, beaches, pools, town greens, parking lots and the dog and skate parks are included in the ban.

Art show honored

Glastonbury Arts' "On the Green" art and craft show has again been named one of the top 200 outdoor art shows in the U.S by Sunshine Artist Magazine. "What makes this award so sweet is that it is the decision of exhibitors in our show," said Katherine Simmons, the show's chairman. "They are a tough audience who base their decisions on sales and the management of the show. Other outdoor shows in the Northeast have much bigger budgets than we do and more paid staff. Our show succeeds every year thanks to our generous business sponsors, stalwart volunteers, and an appreciative audience of show patrons who come to browse and buy from the 100 plus exhibitors who participate in the show."

To learn more about the show or Glastonbury Arts, visit GlastonburyArts.org.

Foreign languages award

The local school district has won the 2017 Melba D. Woodruff Award from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The award, which will be presented at the council's annual convention in Nashville in November, recognizes the expertise and professional commitment of the town's elementary school foreign language instructors and supervisors.

"This is an amazing national award and we are so excited to receive it," said Rita Oleksak, the local director of foreign languages and English language learning. **GL**

MY SON'S BEST FRIEND DOESN'T GET DINNER SOME NIGHTS.
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Business notes

Travis Dahlke photo

Starling Physicians

Victoria Kuchciak has joined the local office of **Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties**.

A native of Ukraine, she went to medical school and practiced as a dentist. She came to the United States in 2003 and speaks Ukrainian, Polish, Russian and English.

Starling Physicians has opened a new location at 289 Western Boulevard. The offices house specialists in several specialties, including orthopedic and sports medicine, surgery, physical and occupational therapy and radiology. Town council Chairman and local veterinarian Chip Beckett welcomed the group at its grand opening. "Glastonbury is very proud of this medical complex where Starling now has a presence," he said. "For Glastonbury and all of Eastern Connecticut, we now have superior medical access that 15 years ago we never could have envisioned. We are happy to welcome them to the neighborhood."

Courtesy photos

E.A. Quinn Landscape Contracting, Inc. has opened a one-of-a-kind outdoor display at its headquarters at 240 Commerce Street.

The 2,200-square-foot display includes several outdoor living features such as a fire pit, an outdoor kitchen, a pavilion, sitting wall, and

Victoria Kuchciak

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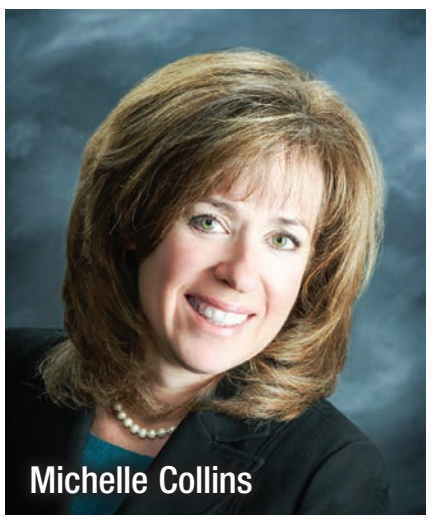
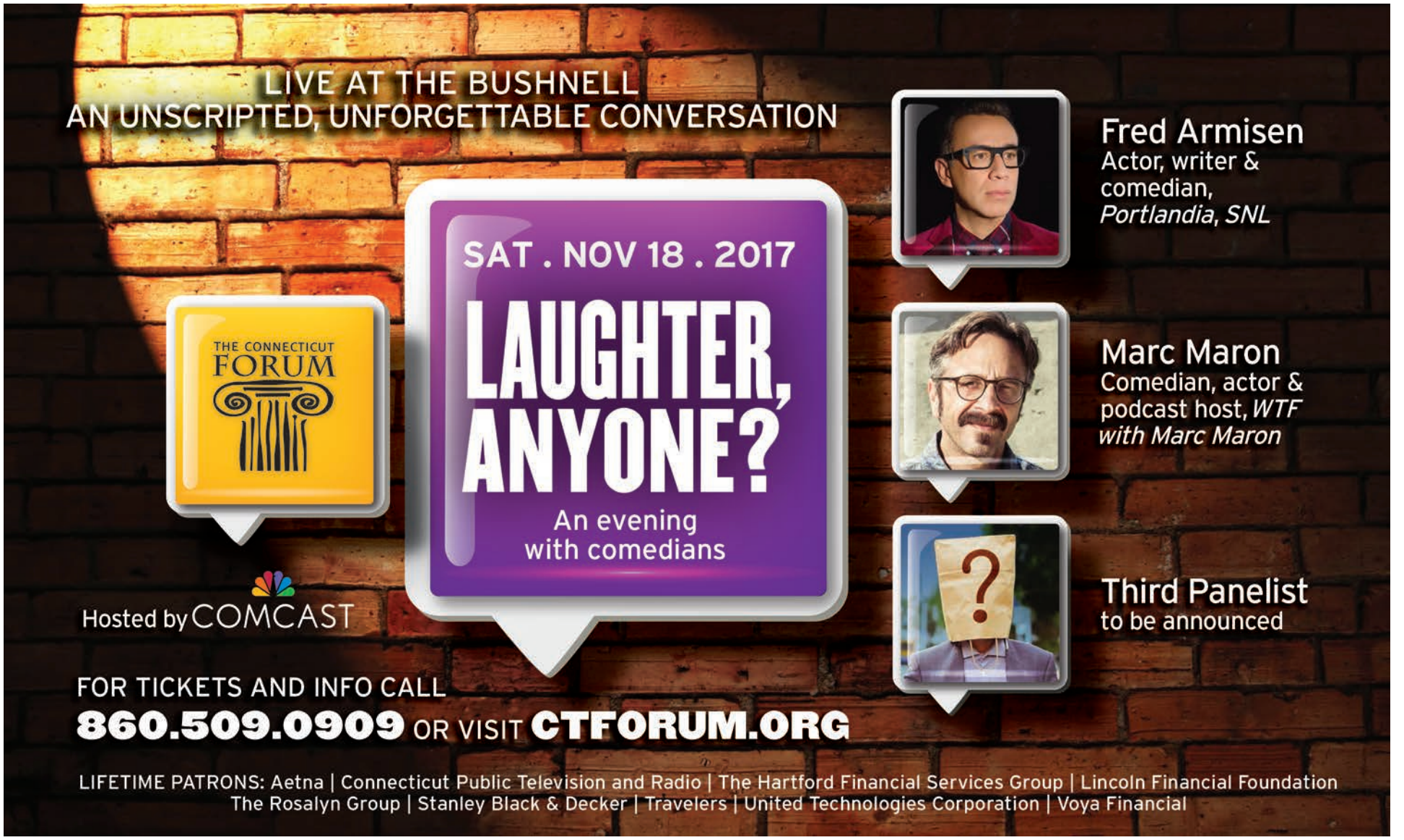


outdoor lighting. To learn more, visit eaquinn.com, email info@EAQuinn, or call 860-633-0115.

Employees from **Cronin**, a local marketing agency, participated in a variety of projects as part of the company's fifth annual Cronin Cares week. Volunteers feed needy people in New Britain, cleaned up a community garden and Sigourney Square Park in Hartford and chaperoned a group of youths from the Boys & Girls Club of Hartford on a trip to a local trampoline park.

Tracy Molloy was the top listing agent, Wendy Anderson was the top new sales agent and Michelle Collins was the top closed sales agent at the Glastonbury/Marlborough office of **Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties** for August. **GL**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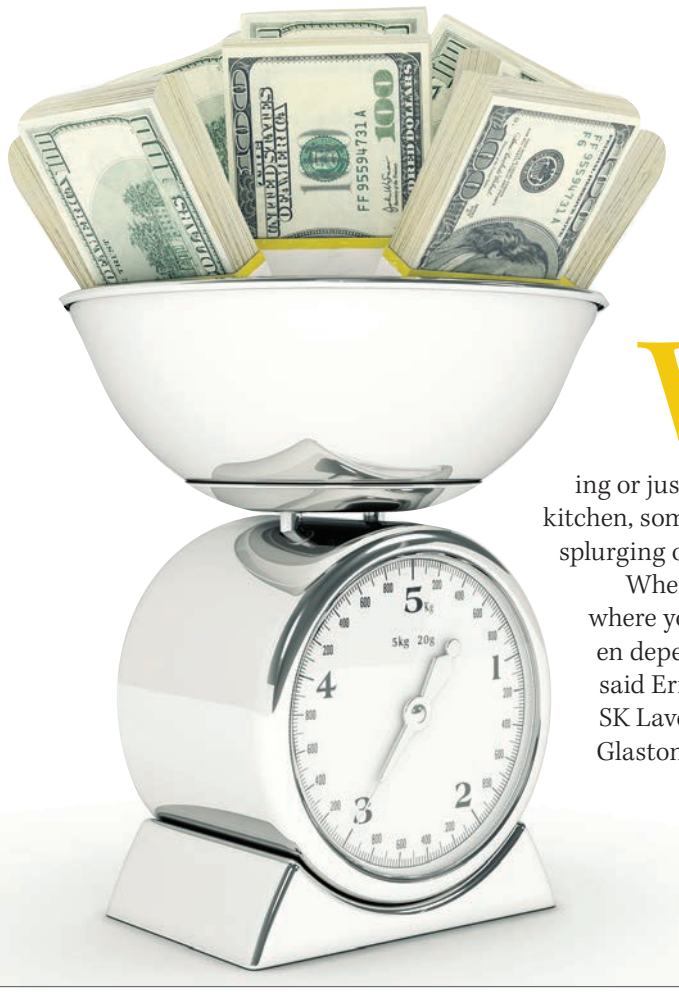
Living *Spaces*

Kitchen cents

Where to splurge and how to save



by Lynn Woike
LIFE Staff

Whether you're building, remodeling or just updating your kitchen, some things are worth splurging on.

Where you splurge and where you save in the kitchen depends on the client, said Eric Sharp, manager of SK Lavery Appliance in Glastonbury.

For instance, clients who love to cook will likely splurge on a range, and those who entertain often or have large families may be more likely to spend more for a dishwasher with a shorter cycle.

"Splurge on what you use the most," Sharp said, adding, "Some people even own two dishwashers."

He has noticed that if someone splurges on one thing – such as a beverage center – they are likely to "splurge on everything to get that awesome-looking kitchen ... so everything matches."

Other customers are willing to mix and match brands to save money.

There's a lot to splurge on, he said, such as microwaves in a drawer under the counter and a refrigerator that take pictures of its contents so that you can check to see if more milk is needed or you're out of ketchup. While refrigerator doors have been dispensing water and ice for years, some now have Keurig K-Cup brewing systems in the doors.

"You can spend some money if you want to," Sharp said.

"The trending splurge is the induction electric cooktop range that performs like gas," he said, noting that customers who see it in the showroom see how it performs like gas but is much easier to clean.

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"I think people should splurge on cooking," said Brian Zippin of Contractors Home Appliances, East Granby, noting that people are eating out less and preparing more of their meals at home.

Those who like to cook can consider a more powerful or a larger range. By expanding from the standard 30-inch models, customers can get additional features including more burners, griddles, grills, a convection oven and a proofing feature, he said.

To save money on appliances, he suggested shopping "the calendar holidays" such as Columbus Day, Labor Day, July 4th and Black Friday, which has turned into the entire month of November.

"The whole month of November, the manufacturers are very aggressive," Zippin said.

Another way to save is to take advantage of offers and promotions. For instance, buying four appliances from one manufacturer results in a $400 rebate and a 10 percent rebate from another, he said. Other times, a manufacturer might offer a free dishwasher when you buy a range.

Many people "like to show off the jewelry – like the faucets and the cabinet hardware and the appliances," said Jim Corthouts, general manger at Home Design District and Holland Kitchens in West Hartford.

"Splurge on what you use the most. Some people even own two dishwashers."
–Eric Sharp

"So, the place to save in doing that would be the cabinetry," he said, noting that cabinets have the largest price tag and the largest fluctuation when it comes to price. "You have the largest control over your budget when choosing cabinets."

There is a 60 percent difference in price between the high-end custom cabinetry and the least expensive line. Semi-custom options offer even more savings, Corthouts said.

He suggested customers save money by delaying the installation of a separate buffet area or a wet bar, and by not choosing a built-in refrigerator. Sinks and countertops are other places you can save some money in the kitchen. If you have hardwood floors you can salvage, that would also reduce remodeling costs.

"It's important not to cut corners in lighting. You want to have a really good lighting plan," he said, noting that LED lights are coming down in cost.

What will save you the most, Corthouts said, is having "someone who's been around the block" help you design your space.

"They're going to be able to help someone with their budget more than any other thing. A good professional kitchen designer knows how to help people save money. We do it as part of our service," he said.

"The price of the cabinets is where they never should cut corners," said David Szydlo, president of Creative Kitchen and Bath in Canton.

The custom options, workmanship, installation expertise and the length of the warrantee it comes with all determine the price. While he offers a lifetime warrantee, three years is common with some businesses.

Most people are not looking at long-term value, instead preferring to buy the least expensive cabinets.

"The old adage is true," Szydlo said, "You get what you pay for. ... Go with someone reliable who will give you a fair price."

The one place he suggested for saving money was to go with a Formica laminate kitchen countertop rather than quartz or granite. GL

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Every square inch

How to make the most of under-the-stairs space

by Allie Rivera
Staff Writer

In any multi-level home, the space underneath the stairs can often be an afterthought, a strange collection of miscellaneous items that haven't found a home elsewhere in the house. With a bit of design and forethought, however, that space can be utilized in a variety of ways that are both fun and functional.

"Especially for younger homeowners whose interior living space may be more limited, using that space effectively and efficiently can improve everyday living and all the activities that go with it," said Daniel Bailey,

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Living Spaces

owner of Heartwood Designs & West Hartford Radiator Cover.

A woodworker and designer for over 40 years, Bailey said he first began thinking about creative uses for under-stair space when he and his wife lived in Europe.

"The population density was higher and living spaces generally smaller, but equipped to provide adequate interior storage and accommodate lifestyle needs," he said.

According to Bailey, the space underneath a staircase can be converted to increase livable space, but it is important that in doing so, people stick with the overall aesthetic of the house.

"Converting unused or vacant space in the home is always a positive if handled in an aesthetically pleasing manner, however it's as easy to re-muddle as remodel," he said. "This is where it is important to consult someone with a sense of design. The conversion of the area into livable space needs to coordinate reasonably with the rest of the home."

To turn that area into a livable space, Bailey suggested thinking about the needs of the people of the home. One possibility he suggested is turning it into a homework area for children by adding a small desk or bench.

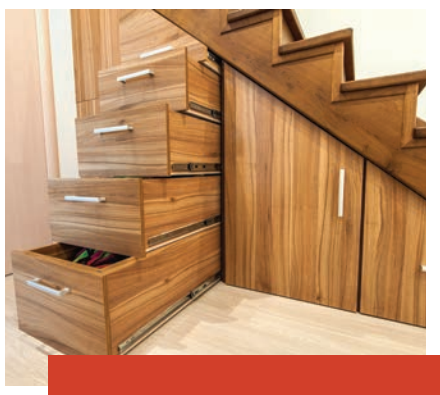
For those looking for a more comfortable space for all ages, Bailey suggested creating a reading nook with a bookshelf.

"Built-ins, such as benches with or without storage, are also an option under the stairs," he said. "The trick is to make these home improvements in a way that is consistent with the interior architecture of the home."

Along with creating more livable space, the under-stair area can also be used to increase storage in unique ways.

"The main thing, I think, would be to use it for something to store," said Roman Szewczak, owner of Expert Kitchens and Bath in New Britain. "Some people do custom drawers that pull out from the side, but it really depends on how your stairs are set up."

Also a professional woodworker, Szewczak said that in his experience



"The main thing, I think, would be to use it for something to store."

– Roman Szewczak

he has seen clients build custom storage units to fit in that space, some opting for an additional closet and others looking for visibly pleasing shelving.

For stairs leading down to a basement, Szewczak suggested using the space to create a small wine cellar.

"You can get shelving underneath for it, or waterfall wine racks can be installed," he explained. "They're ones that step down and slide underneath."

Both designers agreed that when thinking about changing the use of an under-stair space, it is important to consider each situation uniquely.

"It all really comes back to how your stairs are set up," Szewczak said.

To get the most use out of the space, Szewczak and Bailey both suggested contacting an experienced designer who can best determine how to transform the area.

"The visual outcome is as important as the utilitarian," Bailey said. "When it comes to shelving and closets under the stairs, it is important to design and build them for efficiency and convenience, especially in tight living quarters." **GL**

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Living *Spaces*

Making room for more

In-law apartments fill need, help everyone

by Alicia B. Smith
Associate Editor

Builder Mark Stidsen of Landsen Construction Corp. in Glastonbury chuckled about the in-law, or accessory apartment, he built in town and how the family's grandfather is still going strong, even though his grandchildren, who were kids when he moved in, are now out of college.

"It's kind of funny," Stidsen said of this particular project and how long the space has been occupied.

"It works out nice for everyone," he added about other similar projects he has done for families.

Stidsen said many families opt to build space for an aging relative as they may live out of state and need more care than they are getting and families would rather have them close by. In other cases, the aging family member may want to downsize, and moving in with family can be an option.

For those who are considering taking in a family member and creating space in their current home for them, Stidsen recommends researching local town ordinances first. Each community may have a different set of rules and guidelines as to what is and is not permissible when it comes

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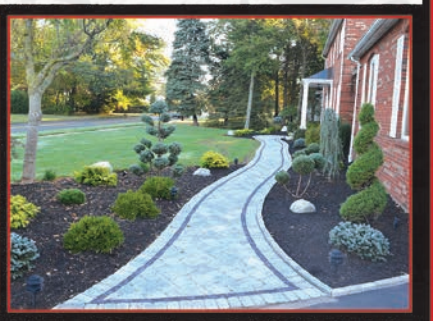

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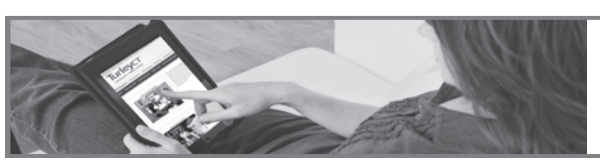

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to accessory apartments.

"You need to pay attention to that," Stidsen said.

In Glastonbury, for instance, accessory apartments that are an addition cannot exceed 800 square feet and must be a part of the house so the finished project does not look like a two-family home.

In some instances, the utilities will have to be separate and a separate entrance will be necessary.

"Other towns have different scenarios. Every one is different," he said.

From there, families can then decide what type of solution might be best. This could be to put an addition onto there home, or if they have a large enough house, the best option might be close off part of the home and create a bedroom, bath and kitchen area from this space.

"It seems like it works out," Stidsen said of clients who he has worked with in the past.

Among the benefits for the family, he said, is if the family's situation changes and the occupant moves, say, the homeowner can use the space as a rental.

Jim Rose, owner of Rose Inc. in Farmington, has experience putting accessory apartments in and said the phenomena tend to come in waves. At different times through the years the concept is more popular than at other times.

His company has worked with families who have opted to renovate space above a garage as well as put an addition onto a house. Making a decision as to where to put an accessory apartment can come down to how much space is available and the budget for the project.

"I like to get an architect involved," Rose said. "Its easier to have everything drawn up, easier to change the mind than after the fact."

Realtor Nuala Griffin of Berkshire Hathway in Avon has noticed home buyers are looking to have options for their family members to live with them.

"I think more and more things are returning to how they used to be with your parents coming to live with you," she said.

"What they are hoping to find, either to take over the space over the garage and make that into a unit," Griffin said, adding that accessory stairs can be added. "Or what they are doing is giving them the entire lower level, giving them a bedroom, bathroom and living space," she said of basement areas.

The area, Griffin, said has plenty to offer homebuyers looking for such a configuration. Many of the houses built in the 1990s are large enough to make room for additional family members.

In some instances, too, families are buying homes with a master suite on the first floor and allowing an older parent to have that space while they move to the second floor with their children.

Griffin said, too, another option for a family is to use space that exists but is not often used and let the elder person have that space as their own with some modest modifications, such as adding a full bath to the first floor. Formal living rooms and dining rooms are such spaces, often not used when most of the activity is confined to the kitchen and family room.

"People are getting to be more practical," Griffin said.

While many families are looking to find ways to accommodate aging parents, in some cases families are looking for an accessory apartment to use for extended family that come to visit for longer stays. Those with family in Germany or India may have relatives who visit for three or four months and they can use the accessory space.

"I think people are searching for solutions," Griffin said, adding that the space can allow families more financial flexibility and, ultimately, be less expensive than paying for adult housing.

There is also the added benefit of the different generations learning from one another.

"I think it's nice to have an opportunity to be around grandchildren. You don't want to be on top of them," Griffin said. **GL**

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Real estate investing for beginners

Real estate has historically remained a sound investment, boasting a long-term appreciation rate that makes it a worthwhile investment for those who can withstand temporary setbacks in housing prices and hold on to their properties over the long haul.

The following are a few things potential real estate investors should consider as they decide if investing in real estate is right for them.

Personal ability

Real estate investors typically have tenants, and those tenants inevitably have needs. Investors who have experience as contractors may not find it difficult to renovate a property and make it more attractive to tenants, nor are they likely to be inconvenienced when minor issues on the property need to be addressed. Investors with no such experience will need to hire contractors to do the work for them, cutting into potential profits down the road. Even those investors with contracting experience may have little or no knowledge of how the leasing process works, forcing them to rely on a real estate firm to write up leases and ensure all leases stay current.

Time

Real estate is often a time-consuming investment. Tenants pay good money to live in attractive rental properties, and those tenants will have a host of needs that must be met.

Investors must be sure they have the time to address their tenants' concerns, especially investors with no plans to hire property management firms. Potential investors who already have full plates at work and at home may not be able to devote the time necessary to make the most of their real estate investments. Time is also a factor in that eal estate is not the type of investment that turns a profit overnight.

Costs

In addition to the mortgage on the property, investors must pay the taxes and insurance on the property, as well as any costs associated with maintaining and managing the property. In the United States, taxes on the profits when a property is sold may be deferred if those profits are immediately rolled into another property (such a deferment is only available to those investors who arrange this exchange prior to selling the initial property).

Potential investors need to consider all of these costs, and might want to hire a real estate lawyer to help them make the most of their investments and any profits they yield. **GL**

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Nena

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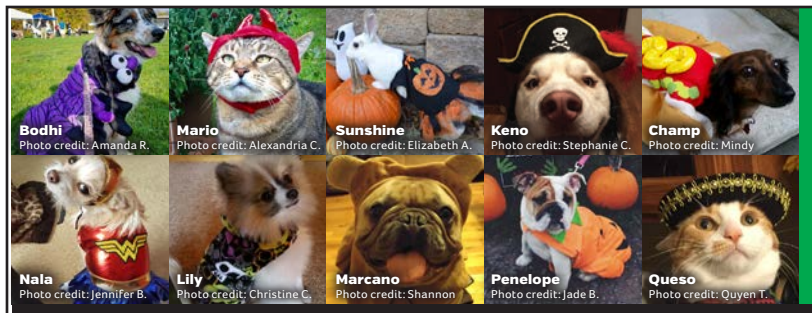

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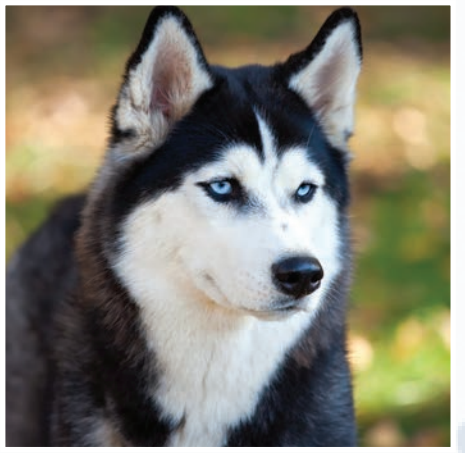

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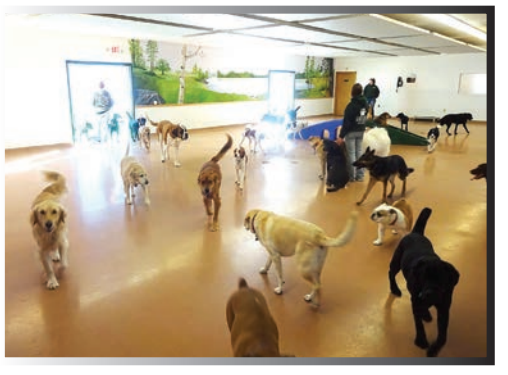

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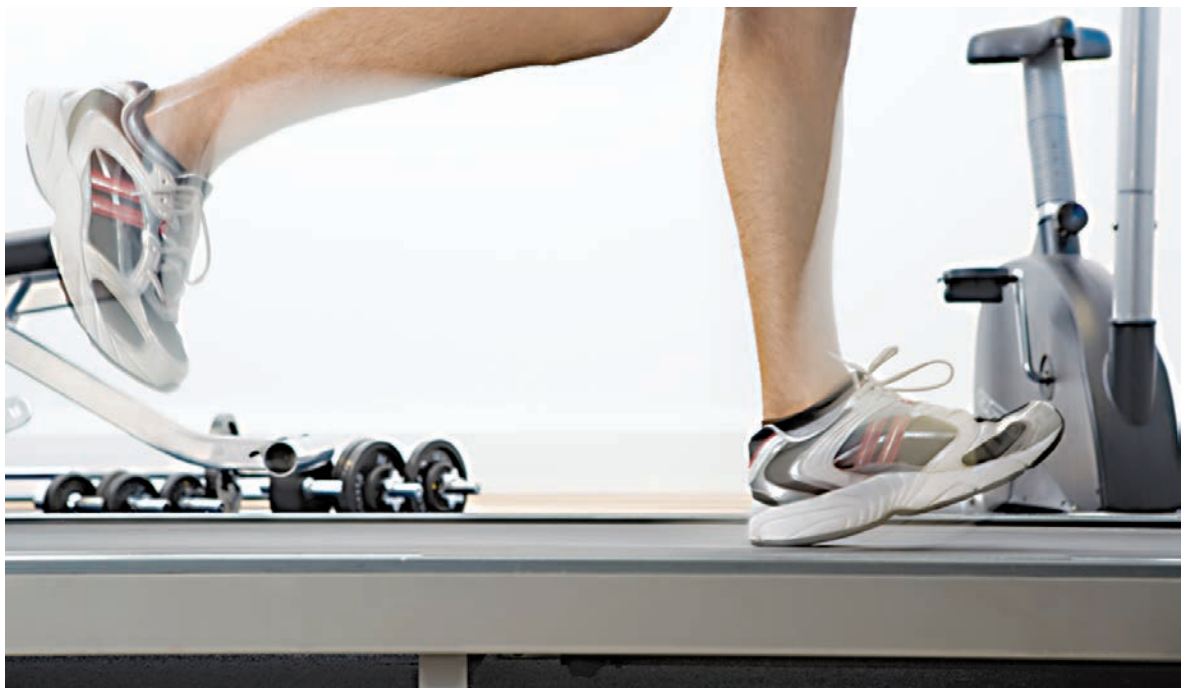

Note from Nancy

My first book

People often ask me if I have any interest in writing a book. Since many of them know I've been getting to paid to write since I was in high school, I guess it's a reasonable question. In all honesty, I've never given it a thought until now.

I've come up with a topic, and it should be a best-seller and definitely a candidate for an adorable little one-day-at-a-time calendar. I think I'll call it "365 Excuses Not to Go to the Gym."

I joined a gym last year on December 31. I kind of got caught up in the New Year's resolution thing and shelled out $169.95 for a 12-month membership at a gym 15 minutes up the road. It's a nice place and that's a really good price. So far I'm paying $169.95 a visit.

Yep. Been there once in nine months.

It was too cold. It was too hot. It was snowing. It was too nice not to be outside. The driveway hadn't been plowed. I had an interview to do. It was deadline. I was busy playing Yahtzee with my computer. A friend was stopping by for lunch. I didn't feel like it.

That last excuse popped up a lot. I've come up with some fairly creative ones, too, including the fact that I couldn't remember the combination to my old padlock. I didn't use it when I went that one time in January, but when I thought about going again and would need to store my stuff I realized I had no idea what the combination was or what the secret code that I'd written on the back meant. It was supposed to trigger something that would remind me. Yeah, right. When I set up a secret code, I make sure nobody, apparently including me, can figure it out.

To eliminate that excuse, I went out a couple of weeks ago and bought a padlock that I could set to any combination I wanted. I decided on my three initials and the last two digits of my birth year, then, just to be sure I wouldn't forget, I wrote it down. Have I shown up with my new padlock yet? Um, no. It's been too hot. It's been deadline. I didn't feel like it.

My physician's comment when I fessed up about my lack of exercise was "Well, there's some work to be done there." I love the man.

I wasn't always a lazy slug. I got involved in a boot camp in Wethersfield nearly 10 years ago and was faithful about going until the class got taken over by 30-somethings who were training for triathlons. Then I signed up somewhere else for boxing fitness, which I absolutely loved until the boxing classes turned into kick-boxing classes – not good for people with artificial hips – and also eventually got taken over by 30-somethings, only these folks were training for those extreme mud/obstacle course marathon competitions.

Here's the really crazy thing – we have a room full of exercise equipment in our basement. There's a Bow-Flex thing that my husband bought and rarely uses, although he does go to his gym three times a week, an elliptical trainer that has a coating of dust on it, and my spiffy hardly used 24-speed bicycle set up to work as a stationary bike. There's a TV set and a DVD player. There's also a litter box and food for our kitty, who's pretty much the only one who goes in there. My new excuse about not using my stuff in there is that she'd want to check it out and might hurt a paw.

After writing this I'm feeling ashamed and just the tiniest bit inspired to head up the road or at least venture into the basement.

But I can't. I have another story to write. It's so nice out. I'm not in the mood.

Maybe tomorrow. – *Nancy Thompson*

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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]

Color Changing...

It's now officially fall and the annual transition of foliage is underway. Of course, being in New England, we're a tourist destination for leaf peepers, compliments of the vibrant show of color.

Back in June on the summer solstice, we had a total of 15 hours and 14 minutes of possible daylight; by the time we reach the winter solstice, that number shrinks to 9 hours and 7 minutes – a pretty incredible loss of just over 6 hours! As we progress out of summer and into autumn, shorter days and cooler nights signal trees that winter is coming. But before the landscape becomes barren, we are treated to a gorgeous landscape of reds, golds, yellows and all shades in between.

So why or how does the process happen, before the leaves fall from the trees? It basically comes down to a chemical reaction. All of those brilliant colors are always present, they're just masked during the warmer months by chlorophyll, the green pigment. In the fall, the chlorophyll begins to break down, fading away, as water is cut off from entering the leaf (when temperatures drop) allowing all of the other colors to appear.

If you're planning travel to catch the sights of the season, every week we'll be bringing you foliage reports from across Connecticut and the Northeast on Channel 3! **GL**

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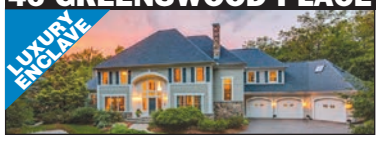
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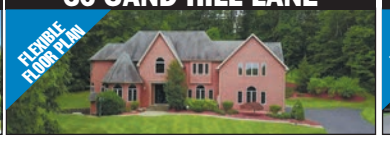
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KRISTIE BENJAMIN 860-918-01654

EAST HAMPTON $429,000
4BR/2.1BA 3 yr old Col. 3 car garage. Oak HW flrs thruout. 9ft ceils on 1st flr. Kit w/ granite, b'fast bar, SS apps. FR w/ gas fp & slider to lg deck. MBR w/ 2 wlk-in closets. MBA w/ whirlpool tub & dbl sinks. C/ Air, wlk-out bsmnt, private backyard.
JOANNE BARMASSE 860-301-8949

MANSFIELD $374,900
6BR/4.1BA well maintained, custom built colonial. Private setting on cul-de-sac w/ in-ground pool. MBR/ in-law suite, soaring ceilings & oversized windows allowing plenty of natural light. Abundant closet space & attics allow for tons of storage.
STEPHANIE MANSELL 860-428-1408

HEBRON $424,900
Brand new & 100% complete! 4BR/2.1BA on level lot. Opn flr pln w/ 18'foyer & 9'ceils on 1st flr. FR w/ gas fp. Lg EIK w/ SS, granite & lg isle. Wide HW flrs thruout. Side load 2 car gar. MBR w/ walk in closet & jetted corner tub. Lg Trex deck.
HERB CARLTON 860-716-5347

MANCHESTER $174,900
2BR/1BA fully updated mid-century Ranch built in '64. Open floor plan w/ HW flrs thruout. New 20 yr warranty covers NEW roof, siding, gutters & shutters! EIK w/ SS apps. Gas fp in xlg LR. Only 2 previous owners & both maintained it extremely well!
SARAH MARTIN 860-539-7726

PORTLAND $354,000
4BR/1.1BA Col. New roof, siding, furnace (Buderus), C/Air, HW flrs thruout. New kit w/ quartz counters & backsplash. Newer SS apps. Open concept. 1/2BA on 1st flr w/ lndry. DR w/ French doors. Stone fp in LR. Walk-out bsmnt. 3 bay det gar 2yrs old.
SHARON FOX 860-805-6917

PORTLAND $369,999
4BR/2.1BA Col. Upgraded EIK w/ SS apps & quartz counters. LR w/ wood burning fp w/ a cultured stone surround. Heated & fenced in mineral pool. Irrigation sys, composite deck, playscape & solar panels on 5yr old roof. Basement w/ heated living space.
JAMES BOLSTRIDGE 860-759-9823

SUFFIELD $599,900
NEW CONSTRUCTION! Introducing 9 new homes on new cul-de-sac called Fiddlehead Pl. Model home started! Offering colonials w/ average size about 3000sf. Lg & opn flr plns w/ 4BRs plus bonus/media room. 18' grand foyer. Mud room. Public water & sewer.
HERB CARLON 860-716-5347

WETHERSFIELD $59,900
1BR/1BA third floor end unit. Freshly painted throughout. New carpet & new kitchen floor. Heat and central air included in the condo fee. All you pay for is the electric. Lots of closet space and extra storage in the basement. Locked entry.
SHARON FOX 860-805-6917

Glastonbury Office | 119 Hebron Avenue | Glastonbury, CT 06033 | 860.633.3661

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